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Kheiralla

*OGI

BEHÁ 'U'LLÁH
(The Glory of God)

PART II.

BEHÁ 'U'LLÁH

(The Glory of God)

BY
IBRAHIM GEORGE KHEIRALLA
ASSISTED BY
HOWARD MACNUTT

"Ye are My witnesses, saith the Lord, and My servant whom I have chosen; that ye may know and believe Me, and understand that I am He: before Me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after Me."

"I, even I am the Lord, and beside Me there is no Saviour."

"And why even of yourselves, judge ye not what is right?"

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CITY OF AKKA (ACRE)

BEHÁ 'U'LLÁH

CHAPTER XVII.

THE DELUGE.

The finite cannot comprehend the Infinite ; yet knowledge of God is the food of the soul, and the measure of soul attainment. To give us knowledge of Himself, God the Almighty, in His justice, mercy and love, instituted a system of divine revelation through a long line of holy messengers and prophets, appointed by Him to come upon the earth and teach the children of men whatever of His truth they were capable of understanding.

History has recorded the appearance and utterance of these prophets of God ; and history likewise has recorded the corruption of their divine messages, by the pride, egotism and false interpretation of their followers. Nevertheless, God, in His boundless mercy, has continually sent other prophets to renew the teachings of His truth, declaring again and again His wisdom and command. Through Noah, Abraham, Moses, Isaiah, Ezekiel, Zechariah, Daniel, Jesus and many others, God has made a way by which the finite may comprehend Him. The message they all bore, was the same, glowing with the fire and vehemence of divine inspira-

tion, yet in every case, we find that dogma and false interpretation have so encrusted and obscured their teaching, that the power and purity of the original utterance is scarcely recognizable.

“O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, which killeth the prophets, and stoneth them that are sent unto her! How often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not.” Matt. 23-37. Christ spoke from the bitterness of his own experience with the indifference and antagonism of humanity toward the message of truth he brought. He claimed that he was the “Way to God” and that those who sought to come to God through their own finite ideas and understanding, were as “thieves and robbers” who “kill and destroy.” We must be “taught of God,” otherwise we cannot know Him, enjoy Him, and be fitted to live with Him forever. We are required to know Him in His Own Way; as He wishes us to know Him. This alone is true knowledge and attainment.

“There were giants in the earth in those days; and also after that, when the sons of God came in unto the daughters of men, and they bare children to them, the same became mighty men which were of old, men of renown.” Genesis 6-4. In the early history of the human race, the knowledge of God was revealed to mankind, in a high degree. “There were giants in the earth in those days,” intellectual giants; people of deep wisdom and lofty intelligence, knowing very much about God; offspring of the Sons of God, understanding human relationship to Him

and to each other. From this high condition of spiritual intelligence, humanity gradually fell away, corrupting the truth ; men turning from the Face of God, influenced by their own superstitions and imaginations, accepting tradition in lieu of truth and worshiping gods of their own conceptions. It was then, that God the Almighty sent Noah, one of seven great prophets, to renew His truth among the people, to turn them from their ignorance and sin, and teach them to worship Him in wisdom, spirit and love.

Noah "found grace in the eyes of the Lord ;" a "just man," perfect in his generations ; "walking with God ;" warning humanity to repent, pointing the way of salvation ; God speaking through him to the children of men ; the power of God clothing his utterance and the truth of God illumining his soul. But the people rejected him, hardening their hearts and turning away to their own devices, until the "wickedness of man was great in the earth ;" the "imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually ;" "the earth was corrupt before God and filled with violence."

The Deluge was not sent from God. Its calamity fell upon mankind as a natural and direct consequence of human action, the inevitable outcome of predilection for evil, and soul starvation. If we put our hands into fire, they will surely be burned ; if we continue far from the truth of God, violating the laws of His All-wise intention concerning us, we must suffer the penalties imposed by those laws which reflect His perfect Justice. It

is obvious from the spirit of all revelation and from the conditions of our earthly environment, that God wishes us to attain the purpose of our coming here. It is certain also that He will never lower and demean Himself by a wrathful visitation of destruction upon His helpless creatures, repenting "that He had made man upon the earth."

The Deluge was not a deluge of water rained upon the earth. The scriptural narrative symbolizes spiritual calamities which descended upon mankind as the consequence of human depravity and wickedness; men reaping what they had sown, refusing God and rejecting the light which appeared to them in Noah, His prophet.

The dot or point possesses an important value in oriental writings. In "Right and Wrong Uses of the Bible," page 37, Heber Newton says: "Early Hebrew was a language of abbreviations. No vowels were used. Consonants stood alone, and their conjunction, aided by memory, was expected to suggest the proper vowel accompaniments. Vowel points were added to the written language, centuries after the last book of the Old Testament was written. Their insertion demanded a guarantee, if infallibility was to be secured." The cipher, which is represented by a circle in the English language, is simply a dot in most of the Oriental writings.

According to our scriptural record, seven people accompanied Noah into the Ark. This statement is unquestionably incorrect, and due to an error in transcription or translation, for the Egyptian and

Chaldean traditions from which the Hebrews obtained their data, record forty, afterward seventy, going into the Ark with Noah. The error is, without doubt, the result of successive re-copyings by different scribes in different ages, in the process of which the dot or point representing the cipher, was omitted or lost sight of. All reproduction of scriptural record was in handwriting, and necessarily, among scores of tablets thus transcribed again and again, a great number of errors crept in, which could only be detected by the closest scrutiny of original manuscripts, which were seldom available. By the substitution or omission of a dot or sign, the whole meaning of words may be changed; in fact, the proper interpretation of these points, constitutes the chief difficulty in correct translation of oriental manuscripts. As manuscripts grew old and faded, doubtless many of these most necessary accompaniments to the text, would disappear, while unquestionably many must have escaped the attention of translators and copyists. In the particular instance of the Deluge narrative, it is certain that "seventy" is recorded in the Chaldean traditions. The translation of the Chaldean text preserved in fragments of Berosus, states that "Noah, his family, together with his friends" were with him in the Ark. See Geikie "Half Hours with the Bible," page 152. "There, he was to build a vessel and to enter into it with his family and dearest friends; and he was to cause animals, birds and quadrupeds, to enter with him, taking sufficient provisions." Also page 155: "All that I

possessed I gathered together — of silver, of gold, of the substance of life of every kind. I made my servants, male and female, the cattle of the field, the wild beasts of the plain, and the sons of the people, all ascend" (into the ship).

A similar mistake exists in the New Testament, where, according to the St. James version, Christ is reported to have said — Matt. 19-24 : "And again I say unto you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the Kingdom of God." Jesus, in his wisdom and knowledge, was not given to absurdities of speech. There is a reasonableness in metaphor, without which, comparison fails to instruct. Manifestly, the impossibility and extravagance of comparison between the physical proportions of a camel and the eye of a needle, incline toward the ridiculous. The explanation brought forward to reconcile this incongruity; the statement that there is in the middle of the large gates of oriental cities, a smaller gate called the "Needle's Eye," is simply an invention for the persuasion of the masses and preservation of the literal truth of the record. In reality, there is an error which arose from the fact that there are two words in the Greek, exactly the same in pronunciation, but different slightly in their spelling. They are *Καμηλος*, "Camel," and *Καμιλος*, a "rope" or "thick thread." The scribe in writing the latter word, mistook this letter, rendering the text, "Camel."

It is instructive to note in passing, that the expression "rich man," as used by Christ, has no

significance concerning wealth and possession of earthly goods. It is used generally throughout the Bible, in a spiritual sense, to apply to those who make pretensions to superior knowledge, believing like the Pharisee that they "are not as other men." The teaching by Christ concerning the rich man and the Kingdom of God, is the same as that found in Rev. 3, 17: "Because thou sayest, I am rich and increased with goods and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked."

An incident which happened in Egypt, in 1861, will illustrate the value of the dot or point in oriental writings. An English mechanical engineer named Wilson, was sent to lower Egypt by Ismail Pacha, Khedive of Egypt, to inspect ginning factories in the province of Garbiah. The trip was to occupy two weeks. Mr. Wilson not having returned in thirty days, his wife requested the authorities in Cairo to telegraph the Governor of the province of Garbiah for information as to his whereabouts. A telegram was sent instructing the Governor to make search for the "husband of Mrs. Wilson." The Arabic word for "husband" is "Ba-al." By the addition of a dot, this word becomes "bachl," which means "mule." In the transmission of the dispatch, a spot of ink fell upon the exact place where this change of meaning would be effected, and the telegram received by the Governor of Garbiah, instructed him to make search for Mrs. Wilson's "mule." Six months afterward, a large bundle of documents, signed by all the Sheiks and

chiefs of that district, arrived at the palace of the Khedive, the import of them being that no trace of the "mule" had been found.

Returning to the point in question, it is clearly evident from the original scriptural records of the Egyptians and Chaldeans, that seventy people found shelter and safety in the Ark of Noah.

By the command of God, Noah, it is said, builded an Ark three hundred cubits in length, fifty cubits in width, and thirty cubits in depth. These dimensions are practically the same as a large trans-Atlantic steamer. A cubit, although varying slightly according to the different standards, is about twenty inches, or the length from the elbow to the tip of the finger. Three hundred by fifty by thirty cubits represent a vessel approximately five hundred feet long, eighty feet wide, and fifty feet deep. Into this vessel, according to our Genesis account, there "went two and two of all flesh wherein is the breath of life," together with the human beings and sufficient food to sustain the vast assemblage for a period of thirteen months. Overlooking the fact that the scriptural narrative evidences more than one authorship, and that the different statements as to the number of creatures entering the Ark cannot be reconciled, it is vitally important for us to view the record of the Deluge in the light of reason, and determine whether the teaching of the Holy Book is to be taken literally or figuratively.

Without quoting in detail, the numerous and learned estimates upon the capacity of Noah's vessel;

the vast range of scientific opinion concerning the natural phenomena of the Deluge which is said to have overwhelmed humanity, this ground having been exhaustively covered by many writers and authorities ; we may glean from them, positive and clear-eyed opinion as to whether the events recorded were literal happenings or merely symbolical representations of spiritual truth and teaching. To accommodate the vast concourse of human beings and animals, it is estimated that a vessel many miles in length would have been necessary, and, therefore, literal acceptance of this statement, is a gross violation of reason and natural law.

Geikie (Half Hours with the Bible) page 171, says :

“Still more,—how could any vessel, however large, have held pairs and sevens of all the creatures on earth, with food for a year, and how could the whole family of Noah have attended to them? There are at least two thousand mammals; more than seven thousand kinds of birds; from the gigantic ostrich to the humming bird; and over 1,500 kinds of amphibious animals and reptiles; not to speak of 120,000 kinds of insects and an unknown multitude of varieties of infusoria. Nor does this include the many thousand kinds of mollusca, radiata and fish. Even if an ark, as has been supposed by one writer, was of 80,000 tons burden, such a freightage needs only to be mentioned to make it be felt impossible.” Added to this, is the unanswerable argument that many animals indigenous to countries remote from the scene of the

Deluge, could not have crossed the oceans and afterward returned to their native regions.

Considering the natural phenomena of the Deluge itself, we find equal difficulty in literal belief. Genesis, 7, 11—"The windows of heaven were opened and the rain was upon the earth, forty days and forty nights.....and all the high hills that were under the whole heaven were covered. Fifteen cubits upward did the waters prevail; and the mountains were covered."

Rain is the natural result of evaporation and condensation; the outcome of the process of physical laws and forces. To accomplish evaporation sufficient for this mighty and unparalleled downpour of water from the heavens, would have necessitated the heat of hundreds of suns and the use of eight times the amount of water now existing upon the earth. Humanity would have been destroyed by the terrific solar heat, long before the deluge of rain fell. The universe would have been disarranged or destroyed and all natural laws violated. The claim that the Deluge was local, is too weak and ridiculous an assumption to demand much attention, but against it are the two insurmountable facts that water seeking its level, cannot be massed up as this local theory of the Deluge would show; and the scriptural record itself states that "all" the high hills that were under the "whole heaven" were covered. The Deluge was either a miraculous feat of the Almighty God, who, in accomplishing it, violated the perfection of His own laws; or the record is purely symbolical and without any

literal truth whatever. Reason demands the latter view ; refusing to accept the teaching "it repented the Lord that He had made man on the earth, and it grieved Him at His heart."

To accomplish the obliteration of humanity, would have required but the word of the Almighty ; the fiat of His Creative Power would have destroyed man in a moment, without resort to violation of His perfect laws. It is a sin against the almighty wisdom of God, to admit literal belief in the Deluge ; to assume that the Infinite would stoop to such unnatural and unreasonable means for inflicting punishment upon His weak and helpless creatures.

The record of the Deluge is a figurative teaching ; one of the spiritual lessons with which the scriptures abound. This great catastrophe symbolizes the conditions which surrounded humanity at the time of Noah, the appearance of a highest revelation from God and the spiritual judgment which fell upon men for their wickedness and unbelief in it. It was a Deluge of calamities, wars, tribulations and difficulties, which have always descended and will always descend upon those who forsake God and follow their own unrighteous paths.

At the time of Noah, men rejected the light which appeared to them from Heaven, preferring darkness to the radiance of the Truth of God. By this, they reaped what they had sown, perishing in blindness of heart ; swept off the earth into eternity by the waters of God's teachings, in which Noah and his righteous followers found refuge and

safety. To those who sought God the Ark, the Deluge was a downpouring of the Waters of Life, in which they found healing and salvation. To those who refused God, the Deluge was an overwhelming flood of judgment and condemnation in which they perished spiritually, while trusting to their own strength outside God, the Ark of safety.

The earliest theology of the Egyptians records a Deluge of calamities and tribulations which overwhelmed the human race. The ancient Egyptians were monotheists, believing in the Supreme God, but surrounding Him by the many lesser deities and divinities characteristic of the later Grecian mythology. According to their theological traditions, when the people of earth had been led away from the Face of God and merited punishment, God the Omnipotent summoned before Him the gods Nada (rain) and Tum (mischief), commanding them to spread calamities, wars, mischiefs and miseries throughout the earth. Before this, God had sent four other gods, the Rackadeen (Runners), to the four corners of the earth, to save all men who still worshiped Him righteously, by gathering them into an Ark of Safety, in which they should escape the coming catastrophe. This tradition shows clearly that the Deluge was an outpouring of calamities, but later Egyptian theology reverts to a Deluge of rain, from the fact that Nada, the god of rain, was associated with the event, and the "ark" or "ship" indicated a disaster of that description.

In our scriptures, it is shown that the Deluge

was not a literal calamity, for the coming of a greater Deluge is promised upon the earth at the time of the appearance of another, the final revelation of God to humanity. When the waters of this Deluge of God's Truth cover the earth, the spiritual death and destruction will be even greater than that which marked the age in which Noah lived. Daniel 12, 1 — "And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great Prince which standeth for the children of Thy people ; and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time ; and at that time Thy people shall be delivered everyone that shall be found written in the Book."

Christ likewise prophesied of the Second Deluge. Mark 13, 19: "For in those days shall be affliction, such as was not from the beginning of the creation which God created unto this time, neither shall be." As these prophecies of Christ and Daniel foretold a time of greater calamity to the human race than any preceding, they prove that the Deluge in which Noah was concerned, could not have been a literal catastrophe, for had it been such, no later visitation of destruction could have exceeded it. Both these prophets of God the Most High, spoke of the conditions which would prevail upon the earth at the time of the coming of the Second Manifestation of God. This is a Deluge now at hand, during the continuance of which, Mi-cha-el (He who is like God), the great Prince, shall stand up for the children of God.

What is the Ark of Safety? It is the appear-

ance of the First Manifestation of God upon Earth; also symbolized by the Ark of the Covenant given to Moses (Exodus 25, 10-20). This is the Tree of Knowledge, revealed that we may be grafted into it; that we may in reality, be made after the Image of God our Creator, who took the flesh at that time. As John the Baptist heralded the coming of Christ; as Elijah was promised to come in advance of the Lord God who shall appear upon earth for judgment of the world, so Noah lived and taught as the forerunner of the First Manifestation of the Infinite. This was the "Word" hidden behind the Veils of Might, which descended to earth and appeared as Melchizedek (The King of the Truth).

In "Secrets of Enoch," Appendix, 3d Chapter, 21st verse, we read: "And Noe and Nir hastened, and washed the child, and clothed it in priestly raiment, and gave it the blessed bread. And it ate. And they called its name Melchizedek." The same chapter shows plainly that Melchizedek is the Word of God which shall appear another time. "And Melchizedek shall be the Head over twelve priests who lived before, and at last shall be the Head over all being, the great High Priest, the Word of God, and the power to work great and glorious marvels above all that have been. Also 37th verse: "I know that a great confusion has come and this generation shall end in confusion, and all shall perish except that Noe my brother shall be preserved, and afterwards there shall be a planting from his family, and there shall be other people, and another Melchizedek shall be the head

of the priests among the people, ruling, and serving the Lord."

Also in the 4th chapter, 2d verse: "And I will establish another race and Melchizedek shall be the chief of the priests in that family, just as Seth is to me in this family."

Isaiah foretold the second coming of God in the latter days, chapter II, verse II. "And it shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord shall set his hand again the second time to recover the remnant of his people."

The Master, Jesus Christ, in Mark, 12th chapter, 4 to 9 verses, taught us plainly that God as a man, came the first time "and planted a vineyard.... and let it out to husbandmen and went into another country," and that He will come a second time. "What shall therefore the Lord of the vineyard do? He will come and destroy the husbandmen, and will give the vineyard unto others." Also, Jesus taught us, that God Almighty was here and will come a second time. Revelation Chapter I, verse 4-8: "From Him which is, and which was, and which is to come." "Which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty."

Beha 'U'llah (Glory is to Him), uttered the following texts in His tablet to the Pope, concerning His coming the second time as a fulfillment of what Christ and the other prophets foretold. "This is indeed the Father, whereof Isaiah gave you tidings, and the Comforter whom the Spirit (i. e. Christ) promised." "Verily He hath come another time for your deliverance, O people of creation." "He

hath come into the kingdom who was out of it; and today we see you standing at the gate." "The Word which the Most Faithful (i. e. Christ) wrote, hath appeared. It hath indeed descended into the form of man in this time." "And when We come unto you another time, we see you fleeing from Us, therefore doth the eye of My compassion weep over My people." "Beware lest sciences prevent thee from the King of what is known, or the world from Him who created it and left it." ("He let it out to husbandmen and went into another country.") "Verily He hath come from heaven another time, as He came from it the first time." Beha 'U'llah, also, said in Surat-ul-Hykl: "Who (God) appeared once more after the first Appearance in His name el-Abha."

Psalms 110 prophesied the same thing, 2d and 4th verses: "The Lord shall send the rod of thy strength out of Zion: rule thou in the midst of thine enemies." "The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek." Beha 'U'llah is the One who ruled in the midst of his enemies.

By this, we are taught that two Incarnations of the Word shall appear upon earth; the first to graft us into the Image of God, the second to accomplish the judgment of the world by grafting us into the Tree of Life as the Sons of God and separating the wheat from the chaff. Those who believed in Him at the time of His first coming, were united with Him, found shelter in God the Ark of Safety, and escaped the spiritual calamity of the

Deluge, while the unbelievers who remained outside the Ark, perished spiritually. This likewise will be the respective conditions of the righteous and unrighteous, at the time of His second coming.

“And the flood was forty days upon the earth.”

This statement of the continuance of the Deluge, symbolized forty years, during which the teachings of God were spread upon the earth. In the scriptures, “water” is used as a symbolic expression for “teachings.” Christ applied this meaning when he said to the woman of Samaria — John 4, 14: “But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.” In the “Book of Enoch,” 67-8, the same symbolism is used to express “teachings.” “And those waters will be in those days for the kings and the powerful and exalted and those who dwell on the earth, a medicine of the soul and of the body, but for a judgment of the spirit, because their spirits are full of lust, that they be punished in their bodies, because they have denied the Lord of the Spirit and see their judgments daily, and still believe not in His name.” Also the 13th verse: “For these waters of judgment are a healing of the angels, and a death to their bodies, but they will not see and they will not believe that those waters change, and will become a fire, which burns to eternity.” We learn by the interpretation of this revelation, that when the waters of the teachings of God are poured upon the earth, they will be a medicine to the souls and

bodies of men ; that those who do not believe in Him will be drowned spiritually, for these waters of the Truth of God shall also accomplish the condemnation of the wicked.

The waters of the Deluge "prevailed until all the high mountains that are under the whole heavens were covered." The term "mountain" has been used generally by the prophets of God, to mean a "ruler" or "king" of temporal dominion. The Deluge covering the "mountains," therefore, expresses the fact that the great and powerful of the earth were swept away in the resistless flood of Truth which descended from God.

The three sons of Noah—Shem, Japheth and Ham—typify three divisions of the human race. Shem, or "Sam," meaning "supreme man" or the "high man," is distinguished from his two brothers, by his spiritual superiority. From him, were to come the messengers and prophets who should reveal God to humanity. The children of Shem were also distinguished by residence in the temperate regions. Japheth means "beauty" and "fair," a characteristic of the races of northern latitudes. Ham means "hot" or "burned with heat," typifying the division of the human race inhabiting equatorial regions. These were the three ethnological divisions, at the time of Noah, when the earth was not thickly populated; before the time of racial intermingling which produced the varying types of peoples and nationalities.

The Arabs say—"The Children of Shem are prophets ; the children of Japheth are kings ; the children of Ham are slaves."

CHAPTER XVIII.

ABRAHAM, MOSES AND MOHAMMED.

Deluded by superstitions and imaginations, we have continually turned aside from the way of righteousness, seeking God by paths and roads which lead to destruction. In His Love and Mercy, our Heavenly Father has sent a long line of prophets and messengers to teach us anew the way to Him ; each holy soul bearing the same message of Truth ; each herald of the glad tidings, crying "Prepare ye in the wilderness the way of the Lord ; make straight in the desert a highway for our God." With the illumination of this divine mission, came Abraham, the "Friend of God," to whom it was promised that all the nations of the earth should be blessed through him. Genesis 17, 6. "And I will make thee exceedingly fruitful, and I will make nations of thee ; and kings shall come out of thee. And I will establish My Covenant between Me and thee, and thy seed after thee in their generations for an everlasting covenant to be a God unto thee and to thy seed after thee."

According to scriptural chronology which has been sustained by recent archæological discoveries, Abraham lived about two thousand years before the birth of Christ. He was a descendant of Shem, and was born in Ur of the Chaldees, beyond the Euphrates. This country is inhabited at the

present time by the Kurds, who are direct descendants of the ancient Chaldeans.

Abraham bore the title "Khalil Allah," the "Friend of God," and this supreme compliment is still applied to him in oriental countries. Only Christ, the greatest of prophets, received a higher title of honor in the cause of God. Christ was called the "Son of God" and as the "Son" is nearer and dearer than the "Friend," so Christ embodied a higher degree of illumination and closer association with God the Infinite; a manifestation of divine power, supreme to that of Abraham.

The history of Abraham as recorded in Genesis, contains contradictions and discrepancies which are not in harmony with his mission as a great prophet, and which cannot be reasonably explained. In Genesis, it is said that he denied Sarah, his wife, and claimed she was his sister. In Genesis 17-17, God appeared to Abraham and informed him that Sarah should be blessed by the birth of a son, at which announcement, "Abraham fell upon his face and laughed, and said in his heart, shall a child be born to him that is an hundred years old? and shall Sarah that is ninety years old bear?" We must conclude from literal acceptance of this record, that the birth of Isaac was a miracle. To make the record still more unreasonable, it is stated in Genesis 25th, that after the birth of Isaac, and notwithstanding his increased age, Abraham took a wife, Keturah, who bore him six sons. At this time, Abraham was not less than one hundred and forty years old. It is not esteemed a miracle in scriptural

teachings, that at this age, he had six sons by Keturah, whereas the birth of Isaac, forty years previous, was considered the miracle by which God chose to bring forth Isaac, the "Father of the Hebrews."

We must conclude from these accounts, which are unquestionably legendary, that scribes and translators who copied the scriptural text long after the time of Moses, endeavored to exaggerate the importance of their own nationality, striving to show that the blessings of God were confined to the Hebrews, who have never exceeded seven or eight millions of people. By this, they have sought to deprive other nations of the rights and privileges afforded the human race by the mercy of their loving Creator ; assuming incorrectly that they are the "chosen people" of God, whereas all the holy messengers who have been sent upon the earth to reveal the truth, have taught that the "chosen people" of God are those who choose God. Repudiating this claim of the Hebrews, we can only believe that the blessings poured upon the patriarch Abraham, by the Almighty, were blessings intended for his posterity, through whom, according to God's intention, they should descend to all nations of the earth.

It is the inclination of all races to exaggerate their own importance ; to consider that they are the highest and most favored of God's creatures. This is a universal egotism, common to all mankind. We do not find, however, that any other races or nations, except the Hebrews, have asseverated unto

themselves the blessings bestowed by Almighty God upon humanity in general. It cannot be denied that God has conferred many of the highest blessings upon the descendants of Jacob; that many of His prophets appeared in that nationality, voicing His Truth, yet we know that messengers of God have appeared to all races of the earth, teaching the way of righteousness; and this way, this teaching, has been the same revelation of Truth throughout.

If we study all the religions of earth, living or dead, and abstract from them the corruptions and false interpretations which have obscured whatever of truth they contain, we will find that at the root and core, they all embody the same light which has been revealed by God to the children of men, through His prophets. All truth has been and must ever be from God. His knowledge, promise and command thus revealed to us, have always been founded upon the fixed, invariable basis of His Truth. The blessings and promises of God descended upon and enlightened Abraham, appointing him to be the "Father of multitudes of nations." No other interpretation can be put upon this revelation than that these blessings should be extended to and embrace all nations of the earth. As the object in truth seeking, is to condemn no particular belief, but to throw light upon all subjects in connection with human life and accomplishment, it is necessary for us to judge and interpret the Scriptural narrative concerning Abraham, with wide and open range of intelli-

gence, seeking, through the light of reason, the message God has intended to convey to us.

From all available data concerning the life of Abraham, we glean that his name was substituted for "Abram," which bears the intrinsic meaning of "Deity" or "Creator." It is the custom of the Orientals to bestow titles of deity and divinity upon their children, as names, in order that they may enjoy the distinction or favor of God's blessing. "Abram" is derived from the substantive "Bari" or the verb "Bera," meaning respectively "creator" and "to create." Abraham was a Chaldean, a member of the then ruling dynasty, a contemporary and cousin of King Nimrod — "The mighty hunter before the Lord." According to record, Nimrod in his wars and victories, had appointed Abraham Commander-in-Chief of his armies; sent him to conquer other kingdoms and annex them to the Chaldean Empire. In this powerful capacity, he invaded Syria, conquered it and lived in Damascus, as the ruler of Syria. The place where he lived in Damascus, was known and pointed out at the time of Josephus; see Geikie, "Half Hours with the Bible" — page 252. "Josephus, quoting from an author (Nicholas Damascus) even tells us that Abraham ruled in Damascus, being a foreigner who came with an army out of the land above Babylon, called the land of the Chaldeans." This is corroborated by the record Genesis 14, 15: "And he divided himself against them, he and his servants, by night, and smote them and pursued them into Hobah,

which is on the left hand of Damascus." Also Genesis 15, 2: "And Abraham said—Lord God, what wilt Thou give me, seeing I go childless, and the steward of my house is this Eliezer of Damascus."

There is no higher evidence of the inspired mission and character of Abraham, than the record of his interview with Melchizedek, "Priest of the Most High God." "And Melchizedek, King of Salem, brought forth bread and wine; and he was the priest of the Most High God. And he blessed him, and said: Blessed be Abram of the Most High God, possessor of heaven and earth." Genesis 14.

Reasoning from the groundwork of all available data, and by the clear light of opinion most consistent with the facts of scriptural narrative and archæological research, we must conclude that Melchizedek, the first Manifestation of the Infinite, appeared upon earth at the time of Noah; that from Him descended a long line of priest-kings, "priests after the order of Melchizedek," who assumed His functions and bore His titles. It is impossible for us to determine at present, the chronological period between Noah and Abraham; but the history of Jerusalem, now being recovered from a long obscurity in the bosom of the earth, fortifies the belief that it was the city of the King of Salem, and founded by Melchi-zedek Himself. Upon this basis, Melchizedek, who met and blessed Abraham, was one of the line of priest-kings who ruled in Jerusalem at that time.

Prof. A. H. Sayce, in "The Higher Criticism," page 174, says: "Two or three years ago it would have seemed a dream of the wildest enthusiasm to suggest that light would be thrown by modern discovery on the history of Melchizedek. Whatever lingering scruples the critic might have felt about rejecting the historical character of the first half of the fourteenth chapter of Genesis, he felt none at all as to the second half of it. Melchizedek, 'King of Salem' and 'priest of the most high God,' appeared to be altogether a creature of mythology.

"And yet among the surprises which the tablets of Tel-el-Amarna had in store for us, was the discovery that after all Melchizedek might well have been a historical personage. Among the correspondents of the Egyptian Pharaoh is a certain Ebed-tob, the vassal-king of Jerusalem. Jerusalem was already an important city, with a territory which extended to Carmel in the south and to Gath and Keilah in the west. It was threatened at the time by the Khabira or 'Confederates,' confederated tribes, it may be, who had their center at Hebron, and the letters of Ebed-tob are largely occupied with appeals for help against them.

"Ebed-tob held a position which, as he tells us, was unlike that of any other Egyptian governor in Canaan. He had been appointed, or confirmed in his post, not by the Pharaoh, but by the oracle and power of 'the great King,' the god, that is to say, whose sanctuary stood on the summit of

Moriah. It was not from his 'father or from his mother' that he had inherited his dignity; he was king of Jerusalem because he was the priest of its god.

"Thus in one of the letters to his 'lord and king' the Pharaoh of Egypt, he says: 'Behold, neither my father nor my mother have exalted me in this place; the prophecy (or perhaps arm) of the Mighty King has caused me to enter the house of my father;' and in another; 'Behold, I am not a governor, a vassal (?) of the king my lord. Behold, I am an ally of the king, and I have paid the tribute of the king, even I. Neither my father nor my mother, but the oracle (or arm) of the Mighty King, established (me) in the house of (my) father.' The 'Mighty King' is distinguished from the King of Egypt.

"In all this we have an explanation of the language used of Melchizedek. Melchizedek, too, was 'without father, without mother,' and like Ebed-tob he was at once priest and king. It was in virtue of his priesthood, that Abram the Hebrew paid tithes to him after the defeat of the foreign invader. Up to the closing days of the Eighteenth Egyptian dynasty, if not later, Jerusalem was governed by a royal priest.

"There is a reason, too, why Melchizedek should be termed 'King of Salem' rather than King of Jerusalem. In the cuneiform inscriptions, the name of Jerusalem is written *uru* as the equivalent of the Assyrian *alu* 'city.' Salim was a god of 'peace,' and we may accordingly see in Jerusalem

'the city of the god of peace.' The fact is plainly stated in one of the letters of Ebed-tob, now preserved at Berlin, if the reading of a somewhat obliterated cuneiform character of Dr. Winckler and myself, is correct. In this case, Ebed-tob would declare that the god whom he worshiped and whom he identified with the Babylonian Sun-god Uras, was called at Jerusalem 'the god Salim.' However this may be, the etymology of the name of Jerusalem shows that it was a sacred city from the beginning, and lets us understand why the victorious Abram paid tithes to its priestly ruler out of the spoils of war. He had driven the invader from the soil of Syria, and had restored peace to the land of Canaan. It was fitting, therefore, that he should be blest by the priest of the god of peace, and should make the offerings that custom required. It is difficult not to believe that Isaiah, who elsewhere shows himself well acquainted with the older history of his birth-place, is referring to the ancient name and oracle of Jerusalem, when he bestows upon the inheritor of the throne of David the title of 'the Prince of Peace' (Isa. 9, 6). The 'King of Salem' of the age of Abram, was to revive in after times in a truer and more spiritual 'Prince of Peace.'

"The vindication of the historical character of Melchizedek, has important bearings on the value we must assign to those narratives of Genesis the local coloring of which is Canaanite. The way, moreover, in which his historical character has been

vindicated is equally important for Biblical criticism. We have found documents older than the Exodus, which prove not only that Jerusalem was a capital and a sacred city, and that the description of Melchizedek is in strict accordance with facts, but also that there were natives of Jerusalem long before the Israelitish invasion who were able to read and write and to hand down a record of the events they had witnessed, upon imperishable clay. We have no reason to suppose that these records perished, or that they became a sealed book to the Jebusite inhabitants of Jerusalem who continued to reside there after its conquest by David. Does it not follow that the history of Melchizedek and his reception of Abram the Hebrew, may have been derived from a cuneiform record of the age to which it refers, and does not its accordance with what we now know to have been historical fact, make it probable that such was the case? At all events, criticism has no longer any serious argument to bring against the supposition; on the contrary, the arguments are all upon the other side. It is much more probable that the story of Melchizedek was derived from the old clay records of Jerusalem, than that it made its way into the pages of Genesis through the distorting medium of tradition. It is on the one hand too accurate in details, and on the other hand too unlike the picture a writer of the Jewish period would have imagined, to have had its source in popular tradition."

After this evidence of divine favor, Abraham, in

obedience to the summons of God, sacrificed the four things which are required from those who desire to become men of God, viz. :—the heifer, symbolizing life ; she-goat, the symbol of wealth ; the ram, representing family ; and the bird, which typifies high standing or pride. These are four spiritual sacrifices which all of us must offer, if needs be, to attain the station of true workers in the cause of God. After the time of Abraham, these sacrifices were changed into material offerings, by the priesthood, as already explained in a previous chapter.

Illumined by power from on high, Abraham withdrew from the service of Nimrod and entered upon his mission as a prophet, traveling widely and teaching the truth. For this reason, he was known as the "Traveling Prophet." In obedience to the command of God, he went down into Egypt. At that time, the ruling family in Egypt was the Hyksos dynasty, historically known as the "Shepherd Kings," who were Chaldeans by descent, and relatives of Abraham. While visiting them, Abraham took a wife from that dynasty, the Princess Hagar, mother of Ishmael. After his return from Egypt, he journeyed into Chaldea, teaching the people to renounce idols and persuading multitudes to the true faith and worship. Geikie in "Half Hours with the Bible," page 224, says: "Abraham was forty-eight years old when he saw this tower (Tower of Babel), the wickedness and folly of which he at once felt so deeply, that he drew nearer and earnestly implored the builders to aban-

don the undertaking." As already explained in the chapter upon "Miracles," the Tower of Bab-El symbolizes the false ideas of men concerning the way to reach God; the confusion resulting from human superstition and error regarding truth.

Notwithstanding the persecutions of Nimrod, and obstacles laid in his path by the spiritual ignorance of men, Abraham succeeded in establishing a great change in the religion of the Chaldeans, overturning their corrupted ideas and leading many back to the true worship of God the Almighty Creator. His preaching created great religious movements, the effects of which remained for many generations after his death. Geikie says, page 236: "The life of Abraham in Chaldea seems to have been nearly, if not actually, contemporary with a great religious revolution which Sargon I., the founder of a new dynasty, effected throughout all Babylonia."

Finally, hated and harassed by Nimrod, Abraham with Keturah and some of his children, journeyed eastward, crossing the borders into Afghanistan, where, according to beliefs of the orientals, he died and was buried near Mount Cabul, although scripture records his tomb at Hebron, or the Cave of Machpelah.

From Afghanistan, his teachings spread into India, and millions of the Hindoos became followers of the truth he taught. Abraham and "Braham" of the Hindoos are one and the same. He was the founder of Brahmanism, which, like all other great codes of religious teaching, has become

corrupted, and is scarcely recognizable in its present form. Abraham himself never visited India, and most of the Brahamins are ignorant of the origin of their beliefs. A proof of this is found in the fact that the Covenant which God made with Abraham, the promise of blessings to him and to his posterity, is still the foundation of the Hindoo religions at the present day. Nearly all the Hindoo beliefs are based upon it. This Covenant is recorded in Genesis 15, 17-18. "And when the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell upon Abram, and lo, a horror of great darkness fell upon him. And it came to pass that, when the sun went down, and it was dark, behold a smoking furnace, and a burning lamp that passed between those pieces. In that same day the Lord made a covenant with Abram, saying, "Unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates."

According to this covenant, the "smoking furnace" and "burning lamp" which passed between the pieces of Abraham's sacrificial offerings, symbolized the promise of God to him, that through clouds of ignorance and spiritual darkness of the world, a light should appear; that in this light, God the Infinite should manifest Himself to the seed of Abraham, in the "land of promise," Syria. This is the significance of the "burning lamp;" the covenant of God with the whole world. This symbol is still used in India. Geikie, page 263, "Notes from Van Bohlen's Genesis," page 180: "A burning lamp or fire is still used in India, in

ratification of a covenant. A person promising anything, if doubted, points to the flame of a lamp, adding, "that is my witness." At other times, the parties to a covenant, confirm by saying "we invoke the lamp of the Temple" (Roberts Illuminations).

In Clarke's "Ten Great Religions," page 127 : "If he should visit a Chinese temple he would there hear the liturgy which says: One in spirit, we invoke Thee; Hail, Amit-Abha of the world. O would that our merciful teacher, Sakya-muni, and our great Father, Amit-Abha, would now descend and be present with us."

By this, we learn that the Hindoos are expecting the God Abha to descend and be present with them, which expectation had its origin in the teachings of Abraham after his vision of the covenant. "Abha" or "Beha," in the Arabic, signify "Excellent Glory." The conclusion is inevitable that this Arabic word was introduced into India by the Arabic prince Abraham, the patriarch. In "Book of Enoch," chapter 69, 13: "And this is the number of Kesbeel, who showed the head of the oath (covenant) to the holy ones, when he dwelt high in glory; and His name is Becha, that is to say, "Eternal."

After the death of Abraham, his teachings were corrupted, as all other religions have been, until, about six hundred years before Christ, Gautama Siddharta the Buddha appeared in India and introduced the protest and reform against Brahminical teachings, which reform constitutes the religion of Buddhism.

In "Ten Great Religions," page 143: "Buddhism, like Protestantism, revolted, and established a doctrine of individual salvation based on personal character. Brahmanism, like the Church of Rome, teaches an exclusive spiritualism, glorifying penances and martyrdom, and considers the body the enemy of the soul."

We see, therefore, that the far East as well as the West is indebted to the great man "Shem" or "Sam," from whom descended the truth of the Most High God, directing our race to the true knowledge of Him.

MOSES.

The teachings of Abraham, having been corrupted by the Egyptians, God the Almighty appointed a prophet from the family of the tyrannous Pharaoh, a high-priest of Heliopolis, Osarsiph, afterward known as Moses. By the command of God, Moses delivered the message of truth anew to the inhabitants of Egypt, preaching the law through the inspiration of his spiritual endowment and appointment from on high. Moses possessed two great powers; first, "The 'Rod' or 'Stick,'" which is the gift of argument; and second, "Purity of Heart."

It has already been shown in the chapter upon "Miracles," that the "Rods" or "Sticks" of Moses and Aaron, were changed into "wisdoms," which devoured the "wisdoms" of the Egyptian high-priests. Concerning "purity of heart," it is

recorded in the fourth chapter of Exodus, that God commanded Moses to put his hand into his bosom, and when he took it out, "behold, it had become leprous as snow." By this, the pure heart of Moses, and his great love for his fellow-creatures, are symbolized.

Pharaoh and his ministers rejected the truth which Moses taught them. Scriptural record is replete with their violent persecution against Moses and the Children of Israel, which culminated in the "Exodus" into Canaan, where they could worship God without fear or restriction. It is stated that Moses and his followers observed the seventh day as a day of rest, commemorating their rest upon the seventh day after the flight from Egypt. In reality, however, the seventh day was observed long before the time of Moses and Abraham, being considered a day of rest from labor, and not a law essentially spiritual. Geikie, page 153, says: "To keep holy the Sabbath, ceasing from all work on the seventh day, was a custom already followed from antiquity, perhaps from the days of Adam."

Moses and his followers settled in Phœnicia and became rulers of Palestine. After that time, they were called "Hebrews," meaning the "crossers," and having reference to the fact that they had crossed the desert lying between Egypt and Syria. It is sometimes claimed that the word originated at the time of Abraham, when he and his family crossed the Euphrates. This is proved to be incorrect from the fact that Abraham had seven

children besides Isaac, one by Hagar and six by Keturah, none of whom were called Hebrews, although each of them became the head of a great nation. The Bedouins who are descendants of Ishmael, son of Hagar, have never been termed Hebrews.

Moses is considered equally as great a prophet as Abraham. He also received a high title of honor and respect, being known as "El Kelim," "Speaker with God." Throughout the Pentateuch, in the record of the life of Moses and the laws he instituted, there are many discrepancies and contradictions, resulting from errors by scribes and translators who copied and re-copied the scriptures many times. The record of the birth of Moses and the story of the ark in the bulrushes, was copied or adapted by the Hebrews from the annals of the Chaldean king, Sargon, who lived many centuries before Moses. Two clay tablets in the British Museum, record the following: "I am Sargon, the great king, the king of Agana. My mother was of the masters of the land, but I never knew my father. I was born secretly in the city of Atzupirani, on the banks of the Euphrates. My mother put me in an ark of bulrushes, lined with bitumen, and laid me in the river, which did not enter the ark. It bore me to the dwelling of Akki, the water-carrier, and he, in the goodness of his heart, lifted me from the water and brought me up as his own son. After this he established me as a gardener, and Ishtar caused me to prosper, and, after years, I came to be king."

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Moses clearly foretold the coming of Jesus Christ, in Deut. 18, 18 and 19: "The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a prophet from the midst of thy brethren, like unto me; unto Him shall ye hearken." Christ verified this prophecy and its fulfillment in himself. John 5-46. "For had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me: for he wrote of me." By his symbolical teachings concerning the Ark of the Covenant and the Tabernacle, or "Tent of Jehovah," Moses also prophesied the coming of the Manifestation of Jehovah upon the earth. This was contained in the tablet of revelation and promise which God delivered to Moses on the mountain, the interpretation of which expresses the visible presence of God.

The Ten Commandments given by Moses to the people, had already been uttered in substance by Noah and Abraham. The true revelation from God to Moses, was not in these laws of command, but in the promise of His presence upon the earth in "The Tent of Jehovah."

MOHAMMED.

Mohammed, the Arabian prophet, was born in Mecca, 569 A. D., of the tribe of Koreish, which was considered at that time the noblest tribe among the Arabs. His family belonged to the highest branch of this tribe, the Beni-Hasheim. During the first forty years of his life, before he declared his message to the people, he was a merchant. In disposition he was serious, thoughtful, devout, uni-

versally esteemed, and merited by his honorable character, the title "Al Amin," "The Faithful."

At the time of Mohammed's appearance, the Arabian tribes were idolators. God appointed this great messenger to teach them the same truth which Abraham, Moses and Christ had uttered. The essence of his teaching was that man should believe in the Supreme Being, submitting his will to the Infinite Will, and trusting in His generosity and providence. He taught as Christ did, that the first step toward God is to love humanity. This is the foundation principle alike of Christianity and Islam.

If we judge Mohammed without prejudice, we will find his character equally lustrous as any of the great prophets who are esteemed as our highest examples. The bloodshed which has marked the history of the religion which bears his name, cannot be charged to Mohammed himself. If Mohammedanism was carried by the edge of the sword, it was the outcome of material desires and preference for earthly power evinced by Mohammed's followers, who, in their fanaticism and inhumanity, violated the spiritual principles and lofty teachings of God's appointed prophet. After Mohammed's death, the true Koran was rejected, and the present spurious version adopted.

Viewing the history and record of Mohammedanism with unbiased opinion, we find that it has been no more cruel and crimsoned with the blood of persecution, than Christianity. As the deeds of the Christian Church cannot detract from the character

of Christ, nor dim the light of the truth he taught, neither can Mohammed be judged and condemned by the religion which began its existence with him. That he was a great prophet and a true messenger from God, is a truth which cannot be denied upon the basis of facts. He taught the same truth, and like all his predecessors, his teachings were centered upon the coming of the Manifestation of God. This is especially revealed in his vision concerning the seven heavens. Mohammed was a close and devoted student of Christ. He visited Syria and drank deep of the waters of life which flowed from the fountain of the Nazarene. His teachings glowed with the fire and love for humanity which characterized the words of Jesus. The literal fulfilment of many prophecies he uttered, furnish overwhelming witness of his inspiration.

Mohammed's appearance and influence upon the world, were foretold by Isaiah, Ezekiel, Malachi and Christ. By comparative study of religions, a method of investigation distinctly modern, we determine that Mohammed voiced the truth of God; through him the tongue of power descended from the Infinite Might, as it spoke through the holy prophets which have been since the world began.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE COMING OF THE KINGDOM.

All religious beliefs proceed from and center in the personality and teachings of prophets and messengers who have been sent by God to show His children the Way, Truth and Life. Every race has received the illumination of this revelation, and from its light, in varying degrees of interpretation, the wisdom of mankind has developed. All knowledge is from God; from Him as the Universal Source, has streamed the light, which, reflected in the souls of men, has produced the thought of the world; the philosophies of India, the high metaphysical theories of the Greeks, the ethics and religions of all races, focus in the Truth revealed by God through His messengers. There is but one God; there can be but one Truth. Whatever light of that Truth has been revealed to humanity, must be, unless obscured by misinterpretation, error and dogma, the same light, wherever and whenever it is found. The first quality of truth is its simplicity. As sunshine is simple, as water is pure, the Truth which God reveals to the souls of men, is never complex. In complexity of teaching we find certain evidence of man's superstitions and imaginations; in mysticism and obscurity of meaning, the invariable absence of true knowledge. All knowledge revealed to us

has been intended by God to fit our limitation of comprehension. As it is from Him, it must be in harmony with all His laws and accord with the conditions of soul environment. Truth vital to our needs, will never transcend our ability to understand, provided we seek it. Our individual action and effort is therefore the true measure of attainment.

The prophets and holy messengers have taught, with unvarying unity of purpose, the coming of the Kingdom of God upon earth. This is the burden of prophetic utterance to all races and throughout all eras of history. From the highest to the lowest races of men, we glean the record of this announcement, delivered from the lips of inspired messengers whose teachings have borne evidence that the power of God spoke through them. As the Hebrews received Abraham, Moses and other prophets, the Chinese received Confucius, the Hindoos, Buddha, the Arabs Mohammed. These and all other men of divine inspiration, taught that the apotheosis of truth and judgment should be accomplished in an incarnation of Deity. Though the symbols and style of utterance varied widely, their messages to humanity epitomized in the promise of a Kingdom of God upon the earth. Among the religious traditions of the American Indians, is found the record of Hiawatha, the God-messenger, who came to teach the earthly children of Gitche-Manitou the Mighty, and according to whose promise, the God Himself should come upon earth to save His children from enemies and invaders.

Jesus Christ brought this same message to all humanity; the promise of the Kingdom of God upon earth. He taught little else in the way of prophecy. This is the Truth that shall make us free; the "God-spell," the glad tidings of which Jesus came to announce. By this revelation of Himself to His finite creatures, the Infinite intended that He should be comprehended, loved and worshiped. Without it, He must forever remain secluded from them, as they do not partake of the nature of His essence. By the manifestation of the Word of God, His intellectual creatures are able to know, see and comprehend Him; through knowledge thus revealed, they may glorify and enjoy Him forever. Through interpretation of the Infinite, man worships and acknowledges a God whom he can know in reality. If God should remain unknown, hidden, secluded from His creatures, our existence here and hereafter would be of no consequence whatever. Furthermore, He would be unjust and cruel if He should deprive creatures whom He has endowed with knowledge of good and evil, from comprehension of His glory and majesty; denying them enjoyment of the great blessings and divine attainments for which they were created and endowed. An unknowable, intangible, unrevealed God is the product of human imaginations and superstitions. Such a God could not be the real Creator of the universe.

The Manifestation of the Face of God from behind the veils of Might; the Incarnation of the Logos; the Fellow of the Infinite from the Bosom

of The Being first appeared upon the earth in the person of Melchizedek, and grafted our race into the Tree of Knowledge, by taking the Image of God, which we likewise bear.

The prophetic utterances of which we have Scriptural record, concern the second Manifestation of the Infinite and His coming for Judgment, at which time, believers in Him shall be as wheat, while those who reject Him, shall be cast away as chaff.

We see clearly from Christ's teaching in the parable of the vineyard, Luke 20-9, that God the Father came upon the earth and announced His later and second coming. "A certain man planted a vineyard and let it forth to husbandmen, and went into a far country for a long time." By this, Christ plainly taught that the Manifestation of God appeared upon the earth, planted His vineyard and went away until the time of His second coming, which is announced in the 16th verse of the same chapter:—"He shall come and destroy these husbandmen and shall give the vineyard to others." Unmistakably, Christ refers to the Manifestation of God, from the fact that God the Infinite, being Omnipresent, cannot leave the earth, His vineyard. It is a clear teaching that Melchizedek, the first Manifestation of God, appeared, grafted this vineyard to Himself and left it, delivering it to the care of spiritual leaders, who have neglected its cultivation, corrupted it and persecuted all the messengers of God who followed Melchizedek; even crucifying the son, Jesus Christ, whom they cast out of the vineyard.

That the Manifestation of the Word of God shall come another time to judge the people who have rebelled against Him, and deliver His vineyard to the honest husbandmen, is taught in the statement — "What, therefore, shall the Lord of the vineyard do unto them? He shall come and destroy these husbandmen and shall give the vineyard to others." As we have already determined, Christ's particular mission was the announcement of the coming of this Kingdom upon the earth. In his own words, "Therefore was I sent." He taught his disciples to pray earnestly for the coming of this Kingdom. He preached the Glad Tidings, the "God-spell" (Gospel) of the Kingdom of the Father. The same teaching is found in the 12th chapter of Revelations, where the prophecy of Christ announces the birth of the "Man-child who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron."

The promise of the coming of God and His Kingdom upon the earth and the expectation of the Millenium, or the time of great peace, are universal. Cumming says in "Great Tribulations," page 16: "It is interesting to show in connection with this, that the universal belief among Jews and Gentiles, Rabbinists, Talmudists and Fathers, that the seventh thousand year of the world is to correspond to the seventh day of the week; six days the working week, and the seventh day, the Sabbath day, rest; six thousand years for the working world week, and the seventh thousand year to be what the apostle describes as the "rest that remaineth for the people of God."

According to prophecies of Mohammed, Mohammedanism shall be annulled, the Koran abrogated and a new religion take the place of all previous religions, when the Millenium begins. The time of this great event is clearly set down in the Mohammedan scriptures. Cumming says, page 17: "Not only amongst the Turks in Europe, but all over the East, Mohammedan power is wasting away; like all doomed things, it begins to be conscious of its approaching end, in so much that they say the Ottoman Porte is paralyzed with prophecies of its speedy ruin. The Turks say — 'Is it not written in your Christian Book that our religion is to come to an end within forty years?' "

It is a very significant fact that while Europeans, Americans and all occidental nations are expecting the coming of God from the East, the orientals believe that the universal religion of the world shall appear in the West. It is evident from this, that the appearance of the Manifestation of God must have been from a point midway between the east and the west, that is to say, in Persia, or in Syria, the Promised Land. Cumming says, page 17: "And what is very remarkable, a friend of mine who traveled lately into Central Africa, and stood on the Himalaya Mountains in India, by the Holy Pool, where never a Christian dwelt before, found there also an expectation of a religion from the west, which in the space of forty years was to possess the earth; these remarks were made to me by their own lips." The friend mentioned was Major Denham, or Captain Clapperton, who visited Africa in 1823.

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In fact, all the religions of the world agree in the expectation and promise of this coming ; nearly all of them coinciding in the statement that it shall come to pass after six thousand years. Cumming says, page 19 : "This idea has been traced in the Sybilline Oracles, in the poems of Hesiod, in Plato, and prevailed long before the birth of Christ, relative to a momentous change which is supposed to await the earth after a period not exceeding 6,000 years. We find this expectation expressed by the Chaldeans, the Persians, the Egyptians, the Greeks, the Romans ; orators, poets, philosophers."

Could this agreement among all nationalities, with their differences of language and the varying periods of their teachings, have taken place by accident ? Unmistakably, the reason of this universal expectation is that the Merciful Father has sent His messengers to every race and nation, revealing the promise of His appearance at the appointed time. He is God of all ; He is infinitely just and without favor. From Him, the same privilege has been afforded to all our race, irrespective of locality, condition or language. He has never chosen some and rejected others.

The second coming of God is plainly announced in "Secrets of Enoch," 32:1 : "I said to him: Earth thou art, and to earth also from whence I took thee, shalt thou return. I will not destroy thee, but will send thee whence I took thee. Then I can also take thee in my second coming, and I have blessed all my creation, visible and invisible." Also in "Book of Enoch," 1:3 : "Concerning the chosen,

I spoke, and conversed concerning them with the Holy and Great One, who will come from his abode, the God of the world." We are taught by the same prophecies, that this coming of God will be for judgment; that it will be the last opportunity given to the souls of our cycle; and that He will be rejected by the rulers of the earth, as Christ announced in his parable. In "Book of Enoch," 38th chapter 4-6: "And from that time, those who hold the earth will not be powerful and exalted, nor will they be able to behold the Face of the Just, for the light of the Lord of the Spirit is seen on the Face of the Holy and the Just and the Chosen. And the mighty kings will perish at that time, and will be given over into the hands of the just and holy. And from that time on, no one can ask for mercy from the Lord of the Spirit, for their lives have ended." In the 48th chapter, it is shown that God shall take the image we bear; that in the human form, the Word hidden behind the veils of Might, shall be revealed. "And at that hour the Son of man was called near the Lord of Spirits and His name before the Head of days. And before the sun and the signs were created, before the stars of heaven were made, His name was called before the Lord of the spirits. He will be a staff to the just and the holy, upon which they will support themselves and not fall, and He will be the light of the nations, and He will be the hope of those who are sick in their hearts. All who live upon the earth will fall down before Him and bend the knee to Him and will bless and praise Him and will sing

psalms to the Name of the Lord of the Spirits. For this purpose He was chosen and hidden before Him, before the world was created, and He will be before Him to eternity." This is the coming of the Everlasting Father, Light of the Covenant, Shiloh, the Redeemer of Job, Servant of the Infinite, My Servant David, Immanuel, and other kindred titles announced by the prophets.

Isaiah 9; 6-7: "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice, from henceforth even forever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this." This prophecy may be taken as a fair expression of all prophecies of scripture which announce the Manifestation of God upon earth. The substance of its revelation to mankind, is the essence of all prophetic utterance. Its fulfillment implies the fulfillment of God's promised appearance in the flesh. Whoever fulfilled it, must fulfill all similar prophecy. If all similar prophecy culminated in any historical personage, the terms of this particular announcement must likewise have been satisfied and completed by that personage. The claim that Jesus of Nazareth fulfilled this inspired revelation, cannot be supported by the facts of his appearance, history, mission or nature. In

no sense can it be shown that the "government" was or has been upon the shoulder of Christ. This prophecy signifies the assumption of either temporal or spiritual authority by the "Son" who is to be given. Christ absolutely disclaimed his ambition or right to worldly dominion. As a wandering teacher of the message God had revealed through him ; as a prophet, a spiritual nomad, he renounced the world. He said, Matt. 8:20 :—"The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but the son of man hath not where to lay his head." He repeatedly asserted his spiritual function as the "Way," the "Door" to God, but no record exists of his claim to earthly power. He said, Matt. 22:21:—"Render therefore unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's and unto God the things that are God's."

As it cannot be shown that Christ claimed or bore the burden and responsibility of temporal government upon his shoulder, the only remaining ground of assumption is the claim that his authority was the authority of spiritual government. History, his ministry and utterances likewise fail to support this claim. Christ did not assume that the spiritual government was upon his shoulder. The church fathers discovered and announced it for him, centuries after his death. In his words and teachings, he acknowledged the spiritual power and dominion of God the Father. He said :—"I do not the works of myself, but the Father who is in me, He doeth the works." He taught the message of the Kingdom of God. He said :—"My

Kingdom is not of this world ;" "Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done;" "Thine is the Kingdom, the power and the glory." "I judge no man;" "I came not to judge the world." Throughout his ministry, he spoke with no uncertain sound, the truth that all spiritual authority and government centres in God the Creator; that in Him alone, is the judgment of man accomplished.

It may be claimed that the government has come upon the shoulder of Christ, from the fact that Christianity is the foundation belief of the dominating and progressive nations of the world. Facts and reason destroy this claim. Less than one-seventh of the people of the world are subject to so-called Christian government. Even this significant minority includes millions, who, though living under governments which profess Christ as their standard, are Christian in no other sense. If we were able to determine accurately just how much of the government of the world was founded and practiced upon Christ and His truth; if we could enumerate the inhabitants of all countries who are truly "Christians" in action and belief, the government thus borne upon the shoulders of Christ, would shrink to alarming and insignificant proportions. Christ himself would have repudiated the practices of the so-called Christian governments of today, and rebuked, with unsparing criticism, the weakness and wickedness of millions who claim to be his followers.

The titles "Wonderful" and "Counsellor" or, as sometimes rendered, "Wonder - Counsellor,"

were not specifically borne by Christ. These titles imply the function of law-giver. As we have seen, Christ never assumed that he was to judge the world. In another prophecy, Isaiah uses the same titles to personify God the Lord of Hosts. Isa. 28; 29. "This also cometh forth from the Lord of Hosts which is wonderful in counsel and excellent in working." Christ therefore did not fulfill this condition of prophecy as claimed for him.

The next title of the Son who is to be given, proves still further the impossibility of Christ's fulfillment. He shall be called "the Mighty God" or "God—Mighty One." As we have shown, the "Wonder-Counsellor" is none other than the Lord of Hosts. We now accumulate proof that the child is to be a manifestation of God the Father. Did Christ ever claim to be "The Mighty God"? In the Book of Revelations, which are Christ's prophecies and secret teachings, we find the distinction clearly made between Christ and "The Mighty God." 1st chapter 1st verse:—"The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him." 4th and 5th verses:—"From Him which is, and which was and which is to come" and "from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness." Christ is here clearly separated from Him "which is to come." This is further proved in the 8th verse:—"I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is and which was and which is to come, the Almighty." We therefore know that the Mighty God who is to come, is to be God the Father. Further-

more, in the 13th to 18th verses, the prophetic vision reveals that He shall come in the human form; the description of His appearance following closely the visions of Ezekiel, Isaiah and other prophets. The irresistibility of this conclusion is found in the fact that Christ, never claiming to be the Mighty God, taught and prophesied the coming of the Kingdom of the Mighty God, His Father.

As if to sweep away all possibility of misunderstanding and false interpretation, the prophet continues, saying:—"He shall be called 'The Everlasting Father.'" It is not necessary to review the fact that Christ did not claim and we dare not claim for him that he was God the Father. The evidence against this point is overwhelming. Even the creed of the church makes this distinction clear—"I believe in God the Father Almighty, and in Jesus Christ His only Son." Isaiah also uses this characteristic title in other prophecies, always applying it to God the Omnipotent; 63; 16:—"Doubtless thou art our Father, though Abraham be ignorant of us, and Israel acknowledge us not; thou, O Lord, art our Father, our Redeemer: Thy name is from everlasting." Also 40; 28:—"Hast thou not known? hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary? There is no searching of His understanding."

The last prophetic title mentioned, is "Prince of Peace." Although at first sight, this may appear to be the most applicable and fitting expression of

Christ's character and appearance, in reality it is the least. Christ said:—"I come not to bring peace, but to lay a sword." Specifically, he never bore the title "Prince of Peace." As we have seen in the previous chapter, this exact title, "Sar Salem," was borne by Melchizedek, the First Manifestation of God. Isaiah's intention and reference toward the fact that a second Manifestation of the Father should come, a second Melchizedek should appear, cannot be doubted. This Second Coming of God, he says, should bear the title which Melchizedek, His First Coming, had specifically borne—"Sar Salem," the "Prince of Peace." Christ therefore was not and could not have been the "Prince of Peace," specifically, unless he was God the Father, which, as we know, is impossible.

The religion of Christ has not been a religion of peace. More blood has been shed under the banners of Christ, than by any other religious movement in the earth's history. Has Christianity proved to be a religion of peace? Has it not "laid" the sword? In the 7th verse of the prophecy under consideration, it is said, "of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end;" that God will establish His Kingdom "with justice and judgment henceforth even forever;" that "the zeal of the Lord of Hosts will perform this." It would be impossible to write clearer prophecy than this. That it shall be the Kingdom of God, established and ruled by Him; that the government of the Kingdom shall be upon His

shoulder ; that from it shall go forth the fiat of law and final judgment ; that it shall stand forever ; that peace and righteousness will follow its coming ; all this is the sense and the only sense of Isaiah's inspired utterance, the prophetic terms and intent of which were not fulfilled in Jesus Christ or the religion he founded. This, too, is the sense and purport of all prophecy, set down in unmistakable language, its clear, vigorous truth a silent but strong witness against the error, misinterpretation and credulity by which humanity has endeavored to distort God's revelation. In His All-Wisdom, He knew the necessity of His Appearance in the flesh. The church fathers not only failed to see the true mission of Christ, but in their blindness, allowed God's revelation concerning Himself, to escape them by industriously proving all prophecy into Christ. It is clear from the words of Christ and the prophets, that in these present days of spiritual enlightenment, the souls of men would strike off these shackles of error and superstition, welcoming the light of the Kingdom of God ; lifting up their heads to the promised redemption.

But this is not new truth. Christ announced it nineteen hundred years ago. True Christianity is founded upon it. Christ did not teach that prophecy concerning the coming of the Manifestation of God, was fulfilled in him. It could not have been possible that he was the promised one and yet failed himself to realize the fact. The Rev. Dr. McGiffert says :

“Not by controversy or argument, but by close chronological comparison and purely historical treatment of the subject matter, that many of the tenets that have come to be regarded as fundamental articles of the Christian faith are based, not upon anything that Jesus did or said, but upon conclusions developed through long argument and discussion out of the widely divergent opinions of the Apostles concerning the significance of many of his words and acts. It is asserted that, finding it difficult to impress upon others a belief of the Messiahship of Jesus, the Apostles searched the Old Testament writing for the prophecies that might, by application to the life of Jesus, be made to substantiate this belief, and that it was the reverence of the Jewish race for aught savoring of prophecy that gave the Apostles power to gain for their faith new disciples.” F. W. Newman, “Phases of Faith,” page 225, says:—“That the heavy yoke imposed on Christians of the present day arises from our claiming ‘Messiahship’ for Jesus. This, it is alleged, gave a premium to crooked logic, in order to prove that the prophecies meant what they did not mean and could not mean.”

Christ taught and prophesied upon this point, precisely what the prophets had written before him. He named signs and conditions which coincide exactly with prophecy previous to his own appearance. In addition, he promised to come himself in the Kingdom of his Father and renew the cup. If Christ was the promised one, there could be no possible reason why he should repeat prophecies of the same intent.

Cumming says in his second series of "The Great Tribulation," page 19:—"Whatever might be the origin of this anticipation so fondly cherished by Jew and Pagan, before the advent of the Saviour, in regard to a happy change in the constitution of things, it is manifest that the hope of such a consummation was not superseded by Christ's residence upon this earth, and the many promises which he made to his disciples in relation to a more perfect state of existence hereafter; on the contrary, the first Christians looked with a more earnest desire for the new heavens and the new earth promised to their fathers." In the 21st chapter of Luke, Christ taught, in addition to his prophecy concerning the Kingdom of God and the signs of its appearance, that our Salvation should be attained in God Himself, at the time of His coming. "And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh."

In Luke, 14th chapter, Christ spoke the parable of the banquet, by which he taught that God Himself would come to be the Lord of the banquet. In Luke, 20th chapter, he uttered the parable of the Vineyard, which has already been referred to. In Luke 19:11 and 12, he referred to the first coming of the Father. "And as they heard these things, he added and spake a parable, because he was nigh to Jerusalem, and because they thought that the kingdom of God should immediately appear. He said therefore: A certain nobleman went into a far country, to receive for himself a kingdom,

and to return." In Mark 8:38, he again prophesied the Father's Kingdom. "Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me, and of my words, in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels." This was the "Gospel" he preached. Paul said concerning this Gospel, Galatians 1:7, 8, 9:—"There be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so now I say again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that you have received, let him be accursed." Christ taught that God would come "in the clouds" and "darkness," meaning spiritual obscurity; that He would come like a "thief in the night." By his parable of the virgins, Christ warned us against falling asleep spiritually before the coming of the Bridegroom. He also taught that Abraham, Isaac and Jacob would appear in the Kingdom of God. Matt. 8:11:—"And I say unto you, That many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven."

Isaiah 24:23:—"Then the moon shall be confounded and the sun ashamed, when the Lord of Hosts shall reign in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem and before His ancients gloriously." This is a prophetic teaching that when the Lord of Hosts shall appear, Turkey (the moon) and Persia (the

sun) shall decline in power ; a prophecy which had no fulfillment whatever at the time of Christ. We are taught also that His ancients, reincarnated, shall appear with Him. This corresponds with Jude 1:14 :—" Behold the Lord cometh with ten thousand of His saints." Christ did not appear with the "saints" and "ancients," as these prophecies demand.

The coming of God in the flesh, is foretold in the prophetic vision of Ezekiel, by the River Chebar. In the 26th verse of the 1st chapter, "Upon the likeness of the throne was the likeness as the appearance of a man above upon it." 28th verse :—"This was the appearance of the likeness of the Glory of the Lord" (Beha 'U'llah). "And when I saw it, I fell upon my face and I heard a voice of one that spake." In the 8th chapter, Ezekiel again saw the "Glory of God" in Jerusalem, Mount Zion—4th verse :—"And beheld the Glory of the God of Israel was there according to the vision that I saw in the plain." 5th verse :—"Then said He unto me, Son of man, lift up thine eyes," etc. This is clear prophecy of the appearance of the "Glory of God" (Beha 'U'llah), in the body of man.

In the vision of Zechariah, 4th chapter, He is called the "Lord of the whole earth;" in the 13th chapter, He is termed "My Shepherd" and the "Man that is My Fellow." Malachi announced His appearance, 3d chapter, 1st verse :—"Behold I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before Me, and the Lord, whom you seek, shall suddenly come to His temple, even the Messenger

of the Covenant whom ye delight in ; behold, He shall come, saith the Lord of Hosts." Also by the same prophet, 4th chapter, 5th verse, Elijah is announced as the forerunner of His coming. "Behold I will send you Elijah the prophet, before the coming of the great and the dreadful day of the Lord." A careful study of the prophets, will reveal the fact that practically nothing of importance has been mentioned outside of this great promise to us. Prophecy epitomizes in the "Coming of the Kingdom of God." The details surrounding this central fact of inspiration, are chiefly concerning the signs and conditions which should appear before the glorious consummation. From prophecy, we learn the status of mankind, materially and spiritually, at the time of His appearance ; and that the kings and rulers of the earth will refuse to acknowledge Him. The nationality from which He will be born, is clearly foretold ; the part of the world in which He will appear, is announced. We know where He is promised to reveal Himself as the Manifestation of God. We are told by the prophets, that He will be oppressed, exiled and imprisoned ; that He will be a wanderer upon the earth forty years, during which He will establish His Kingdom, the New Jerusalem, Mount Zion ; that He will make His residence with the guilty and His tomb with the transgressors.

So we find that the spirit of prophecy throughout the Bible, concerns the appearance and manifestation of the One Infinite God, our Creator ; that only by this revelation of Himself, shall we be judged,

redeemed and fitted to attain our purpose in coming upon the earth. The character of this Face of the Infinite has been explained in chapter 16.

In the appearance and establishment of the Kingdom, we realize the answer to the Christ prayer, "Thy Kingdom come;" the prayer which has ascended to God from generation to generation. To His Manifestation we must turn, and from Him, as Christ taught, we must expect our salvation. Should we reject the Kingdom for which Christ prayed and for which humanity has waited during thousands of years, we shall be judged by the measure of our action. Let us not forget the admonition of Paul concerning this opportunity for our salvation :—"And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption." Ephesians 4:30.

CHAPTER XX.

SIGNS OF THE COMING OF THE KINGDOM.

The signs of the "latter days," in which, according to prophecy, the Kingdom of God should be established upon the earth, are clearly set forth in scripture. Generally speaking, they are the conditions which, in His All-Knowledge, God knew would surround the human race at the time immediately preceding His appearance in the flesh; conditions evolved by the independence of human action, yet anticipated by Omniscience and enunciated by inspired messengers of God, thousands of years before human history produced them. The history of man lies written in the mind of God. Human action evolves and reveals it.

The signs of the "latter days" are very numerous; too many for detailed mention here; but a number of the most significant and convincing will be quoted as testimony and proof that the coming of God the Father was distinctly announced for this, the Nineteenth Century. By studying these signs, we will discover that the history of the twenty-five or thirty preceding centuries, has failed to record them, whereas in this present century, all the conditions have prevailed, all signs have been fulfilled, unmistakably proving the fact that the promised Manifestation of God should appear at the threshold of the Twentieth Century.

One of the most significant signs of His coming, was the appearance of the "transgression of desolation" foretold by Daniel and Christ. (Matt. 24, 15); "When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel, stand in the holy place, then let them which be in Judea, flee into the mountains." The "abomination of desolation," also rendered "idol of desolation," was Napoleon Bonaparte the First, who invaded Syria and besieged the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, Akka, in 1799. In abandoning the siege, he said: "If Akka had fallen, I would have changed the face of the world. My fortune was arrested by a grain of sand."

In "Mysteries Unveiled," page 113, Redding says: "Daniel described a similar character, thousands of years before Napoleon was born. The beast papacy was triumphant until Martin Luther and others cut across its path; this was followed by Napoleon. It took a beast to cope with the great beasts, and all writers of history set Napoleon down as having a disposition as near 'beastly' as ever man had. Napoleon stepped on the stage and in a short time nine thousand two hundred persons were massacred, besides two millions, one hundred twenty-two thousand four hundred and two soldiers were cut down between 1792 and 1804 A. D. The mad dance was going on all over Europe, and it ran into Asia and Africa at times. It is fully described in Revelations, which was written 1,700 years before it took place. When Napoleon had accomplished the things for which

he was born, his power suddenly left him. He came to his end and no one helped him, just as Daniel declared that he would, although he wrote 2,300 years before Napoleon was born. It described his character and what he would do, and how he would come to his end suddenly. Remember, Napoleon cared nothing for God anyway. He relied entirely on powder and muskets and handled them to his own notion. Brute force was his god. 'And the king (Napoleon) shall do according to his will; and he shall exalt himself and magnify himself above every god, and shall speak marvelous things against the God of gods, and shall prosper until the indignation be accomplished—shall honor the god of forces (his armies). Thus shall he do, with a strange god which he shall increase (his armies). At the time of the end, the kings of the south push at him, and the king of the north will come against him, and he (Napoleon) shall enter into the countries and shall overflow and pass over.' Daniel 11th: 'Egypt (south of him) came at him, then the countries north of him made a rush toward him, but he entered into those countries and overflowed or passed over them. He (Napoleon) shall also enter into the glorious land (Palestine), and many countries shall be overthrown. He shall stretch forth his hand upon the countries and Egypt shall not escape. He shall have power over gold, silver and the precious things of Egypt. But tidings out of the East and North shall trouble him (Napoleon). And he shall go forth with great fury to make

away with many.' Daniel 11: 41 and 44. While Napoleon was in Egypt taking possession of the gold and precious things, the countries around his own home (France), rushed in to devour his headquarters (at home), this was the tidings out of the North and East that troubled him, and he hurried back 'and made away with many' as Daniel said he would. 'He (Napoleon) will come to his end and none shall help him.' Daniel 11th, 45: And he did come to his end suddenly. See Daniel 11: 45. Just as soon as the indignation on the beast (Pope and the Roman church) was accomplished, Napoleon came to his end."

Christ named a sign of the latter days, in Matt. 24:14:—"This gospel of the Kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations, and then shall the end come." As we have seen, the "Gospel of the Kingdom" which Christ taught, was the announcement of the coming of the Manifestation of God. Christ, in this vividly accurate prophecy, foretold the promulgation of his teaching throughout the whole earth, after which "the end," that is, the Manifestation should come. Only in this century, has the universal promulgation of Christ's truth fulfilled the strict letter of his prophecy. That a wandering teacher, accepted by a handful of followers, should have prophetically announced what history has so accurately verified, proves the inspiration of Jesus and the certainty of God's promise to humanity.

Christ also said that in the latter days (Matt. 24:7). "Nation shall rise against nation, king-

dom against kingdom ; there shall be famine and pestilence and earthquakes in divers places." This is a corroboration of the prophecy of Daniel 12:1:—"At that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people, and there shall be a time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time." Enoch also said, 1:6:—"And all will fear and the watchers will tremble, and great fear and terror will sieze them to the end of the earth." We need only to refer to the history of the nations of the world, to verify the statement that this present century, in the number and severity of calamities, tribulations, wars, earthquakes, famines, etc., has exceeded the record of all previous centuries. During the last hundred years, not a single nation of the earth has escaped war and bloodshed. In his book "The Seventh Vial," page 90, Cumming says: "Never, I repeat (in the Franco-German war) did so great a massacre of men meet in mortal conflict and never were whole battalions so rapidly annihilated. It was not war, it was massacre. Villages full of life, were turned into hospitals. Waterloo, Balaklava and Sadowa were child's play to Woerth and Sedan. That side gained the day which could best afford to lose the greatest number of combatants. Nothing has before occurred so fitted to justify the full import of the 'place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon.' This word, as interpreted by Dr. Wordsworth, Bishop of Lincoln, as already noticed, means 'the mountain of slaughter.' "

All prophecies concerning disasters and calamities which shall precede the coming of the Kingdom of God, have been perfectly fulfilled in this century. Cumming says, page 99 :—"The Greek word translated 'earthquakes,' means shaking. It is applied to the seas as well as the land, in its literal and material sense. Nothing is more remarkable than the extreme fewness of earthquakes on record before the beginning of the Christian era, in comparison with those which have been registered since that time. During the 1700 years B. C., but 56 earthquakes were counted, only four of which were disastrous, i. e., those that overthrew buildings and destroyed lives largely, being properly 'great earthquakes,' and those four all occurred within the 65 years preceding the birth of Christ. On the other hand, showing the large increase in modern times, in the 65 years that elapsed between A. D. 1800 and A. D. 1865, there occurred within the same limits—that is, the old Roman Empire—no less than 35 great and disastrous earthquakes, arresting the attention of the historian. In the Scandinavian peninsula and Iceland from A. D. 1700 to 1850 there have been 224; in Spain and Portugal 178; in France, Belgium and Holland 600. On the Italian peninsula and the eastern Mediterranean, upward of 800 earthquakes have occurred within the period of fifty years between 1800 and 1850. The two most remarkable years are 1867 and 1868. In 1868 more than one hundred thousand souls perished from the earth by these convulsions, and in these two awful years, 1867

and 1868, we estimate the total number of earthquake shocks felt in all parts of our globe to be not less than 4,000. The year 1867 is likely to be memorable in history for great natural convulsions. The twelve months between Oct. 1, 1867 and Oct. 1, 1868, were distinguished by a series of physical phenomena more remarkable than is shown to have occurred during any equal period of time in history."

Cumming says, page 305:—"The year 1867 swelled the total casualties at sea for all nations, to 12,513 vessels."

Another sign of the times given by Christ, is recorded in Matt. 24:24:—"For there shall arise false Christs and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders; in so much that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect."

In this century, scores of Mahdis have appeared among the Mohammedans, and hundreds of false Christs among the Christians. This condition is similar to that which preceded the coming of Christ 1900 years ago, for at that time, according to history, many claimants to the Messiahship arose, each one of whom gained a following of believers. The fatal error which has characterized the false Christs who have appeared during this century, lies in the fact that they have endeavored to prove their inspiration and divine mission, by the performance of miracles and wonders of healing. The second coming of Christ, according to his own words, was to be simply an appearance in the Kingdom of God; that is to say, when God should appear for judgment of the human race,

Christ, the dearest Son, should appear with Him in that Kingdom, to spread the teachings of the law and truth which go out from Mount Zion. The miracles ascribed to Christ at the time of his first coming, are clearly inventions by the Church Fathers. In his second coming, Christ will not be characterized by the performance of any such supernatural and impossible violations of God's perfect laws.

A sign of the coming of God, mentioned by Daniel (8 : 13), states that the holy people who would come and be present in His glorious Kingdom, should be scattered and trodden under foot. Christ also prophesied this (Matt. 24: 9): "Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted and shall kill you ; and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake." We must remember that the speaker of this prophecy was not the personality of Jesus ; but that God the Father, who abode in Christ, was speaking. At the time of Christ, there was no suffering such as described. The historical verification of this persecution, will be furnished in the next chapter.

A sign which should precede the coming of the Kingdom, was mentioned by Christ in Matt. 24:28:—"For wherever the carcass is, there will the eagles be gathered together." This is also enunciated in Genesis 49:10:—"Until Shiloh come ; and unto Him shall the gathering of the people be." Also Deut. 33 : 2, 3:—"And he said : the Lord came from Sinai, and rose up from Seir unto them ; He shined forth from Mount Paran ; He came with

ten thousand of saints; from His right hand went a fiery law for them. Yea, He loved the people; all His saints are in thy hand, and they sat down at thy feet—every one shall receive of thy words." It must be understood, that in prophecy, the word "coming" originally means "personal coming," in the sense recorded of Paul, that his bodily presence is "weak," for the same word is used in both cases, to imply a personal coming in the body, and not in the spirit, as is sometimes claimed. Complete fulfillment of the prophecies just quoted, will be found in the message embodied in a later chapter.

Daniel prophesied that a sign of the latter days should be an increase in knowledge. 12: 4:—"But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, to the time of the end; many shall run to and fro (originally; "many shall run through the pages of the book, i. e., reading it) and knowledge shall be increased." Increase of knowledge is a distinct characteristic of the Nineteenth Century. In spiritual development and scientific progress, we have out-distanced the total record of previous centuries; in philosophical analysis of soul and matter; in religious development, and the application of natural laws to the amelioration of human conditions, humanity has risen higher and nearer toward God the All-Knowledge, than in any previous measure of attainment. This phenomenal progress and growth has been more particularly confined to the last sixty years, a fact of immeasurable significance when the promise of

God concerning this century, is considered. History and prophecy, therefore, prove conclusively by comparison, the advent of the latter days, in which the Kingdom of God should be established upon the earth. At no time, has knowledge been increased to greater extent; at no time, have men run "to and fro" searching the pages of the Book of God with such spiritual unrest and hunger.

Isaiah prophesied, 24: 23:—"Then the moon shall be confounded and the sun ashamed, when the Lord of Hosts shall reign in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem and before His ancients gloriously." In this prophecy, the symbols of Turkey and Persia are utilized to announce the decline and fall of these great powers. The moon is, and always has been, the emblem of Turkey; the sun that of Persia. In this century, Turkey, formerly a leading and influential nation, has been dismembered and well nigh destroyed. The Sultan, once a dominating factor in the political questions of Europe, now awaits the decree of more powerful nations which shall accomplish the division of his possessions into spoils for the conqueror. Persia, once the proudest and loftiest of Asiatic nations, has sunk to the position of lowest and least in the scale of importance, awaiting the doom now clearly foreshadowed by the designs of powerful European neighbors. By the fall of these once great nations, history has revealed a sign of the latter days, in which the Lord of Hosts shall establish His Kingdom, with justice and judgment, henceforth even forever.

Revelations 16:10:—"And the fifth angel poured out his vial upon the seat of the beast; and his kingdom was full of darkness, and they gnawed their tongues for pain." By this prophecy of Jesus Christ, we are taught that the church of Rome, having served its purpose in the will and intention of Almighty God, shall decline in power and lose its function when the final truth of God is spread upon the earth. In 1870, Rome, the Imperial City, which had been the seat of papal authority for more than one thousand years, passed out of the hands of the Church and came under the government of the Kingdom of Italy, a most significant fact and clear witness to the accuracy of the above mentioned and other similar prophecies. "The Latin races are doomed." The present status of affairs in Europe, is the most convincing proof that nations in which the church of Rome is the dominating religious power, are steadily declining in importance and civilization. France, Spain, Austria, Italy and Portugal are in this process of devitalization, while the ascendancy and supremacy of the Anglo-Saxon races, is a fact so clearly apparent, that comment is unnecessary.

According to Joel 2:28:—"And it shall come to pass afterwards that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions." Never in the history of man, has there been such an outpouring of the spirit of God "upon all flesh," as this century has witnessed. The impetus toward spiritual de-

velopment which characterized the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, producing widespread revolution of religious thought and giving birth to numberless systems of mystical belief, bears no comparison whatever to the great wave of spiritual power which has swept over the world in the last thirty years of this century, culminating in 1892-93, when the Parliament of Religions convened in this country. By this pouring out of the spirit of God, man has been made ready to receive the highest teachings of the Truth which God had intended and promised to reveal. It is clear, from a comparative study of spiritual development and receptivity, that never before, in human history, could we have received and understood this Truth; that God, in His wisdom, knew it was necessary we should be spiritually leavened, before the time of the revelation of His Word in the flesh.

A sign of the latter days, according to the prophecies of Enoch, 99:5, reflects accurate foreknowledge of a present condition, which cannot be denied. "In those days the fruit of the womb will miscarry, and they will mangle their own children; and they will cast their children from them, and miscarriages will pass from them and they will cast sucklings from them, and will not return to them, and will not pity their beloved."

Paul, in his Epistle to Timothy, 4:1, 2, 3, prophesied that celibacy should be advocated in the latter times; that vegetarianism should be taught. "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times, some shall depart from the faith, giv-

ing heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron; forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the Truth." The innumerable metaphysical teachings which have characterized the latter half of the Nineteenth Century; the doctrines, transplantations and revivals of old and worn-out oriental philosophies, incorrectly termed religious truth, mostly embody within themselves, as fundamental principles, abnegation of the normal physical self and abstinence from the flesh of animals as food. Hindooism in all its forms and most of the modern psychic teaching, expound these principles as essentials toward soul development, a fact which did not escape the eye of prophecy.

Polygamy as a religious system and observance, is foretold in Isaiah 4:1:—"And seven women shall take hold of one man in that day, saying, we will eat our own bread and wear our own apparel, only let us be called by thy name; take thou away our reproach." This is the foundation of Mormonism; the fundamental tenet of the church of the latter-day saints, whose power and doctrines constitute a menace and stigma to the civilization of our own country at the present day.

Zechariah said, 8:10:—"For before these days (the millenium), there was no hire for man, nor any hire for beast; neither was there any peace to him that went out or came in, because of the afflic-

tion ; for I set all men every one against his neighbor." This is a sign which has been literally fulfilled in the unprecedented production of inventions and labor-saving devices, utilization of electrical force and mechanical appliances which have reduced the demand for manual labor, and dispensed in great measure, with the work of the horse.

In Isaiah 3: 4, 5:— "And I will give children to be their princes, and babes shall rule over them. And the people shall be oppressed, every one by another, and every one by his neighbor ; the child shall behave himself proudly against the ancients, and the base against the honorable." At the present time, several European and Asiatic thrones are occupied by child rulers, while the fact that childhood and youth in these days, lack the respect and veneration for their elders so characteristic of earlier years, needs no proof or mention. In the oppression of labor by capital and the grievances which underlie the modern movement of Socialism, we have distinct realization of the conditions mentioned by the prophet.

The outcome of false metaphysical and psychical teachings concerning God, the soul, and religious duty, was clearly foreseen by Isaiah the prophet, when he said, 47: 8-10:—"Therefore hear now this, thou that art given to pleasure, that dwellest carelessly, that sayest in thine heart, I am, and none else beside me ; I shall not sit as a widow, neither shall I know the loss of children ; for thou hast trusted in thy wickedness ; thou hast said, none seeth me. Thy wisdom and thy knowledge,

it hath perverted thee ; and thou hast said in thy heart, *I am* and none else besides me." Also in 5: 20 :—"Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil ; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness ; that put bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter." It is certain, that in the latter end of this century, millions of our fellow-creatures are following sophistical teachings, believing, in their ignorance, "I am that I am ;" living carelessly, self-poised, pretending to happiness and spiritual accomplishment, whereas the ignorance which blinds them, is the curse of God and the beginning of spiritual death. Abstruse and meaningless metaphysical theories beset humanity ; contradiction of terms and foolish inversion of reason, seek to take the place of truth ; negation of fact, superstition, error and metaphysical husks are fed to the soul, instead of the food of knowledge ; God is misunderstood, obscured and hidden behind the mask of human pride and egotism. No sign of the latter days has had more complete fulfillment than this particular one.

The accumulation of wealth and estate, the aggrandizement of capital and monopoly of living necessities by the few, to the detriment and suffering of the masses ; the whole groundwork of socialistic grievance and complaint which has reached its culmination in the Nineteenth Century, was foretold—Isaiah 5: 8 :—"Woe unto them that join house to house, that lay field to field, till there be no place, that they may be placed alone in the midst of the earth." This condem-

nation against the despotism of capital, is a teaching from God, to admonish us that as all men have been created by Him from one clay, all men are equal before Him, and no one should glorify himself over the other, in claim or possession. In his notes upon this prophecy, page 31, Prof. Cheyne says:—"The first sin is the attempt to concentrate the landed property in a few hands."

In the 9th chapter of Revelations, a modern battle is prophetically pictured. "And thus I saw the horses in the vision, and them that sat on them, having breastplates of fire and jacinth, and brimstone; and the heads of the horses were as the heads of lions; and out of their mouths issued fire and smoke and brimstone. By these three was the third part of man killed, by the fire, and by the smoke and by the brimstone, which issued out of their mouths. For their power is in their mouths and in their tails; for their tails were like unto serpents, and had heads, and with them do they hurt." This is a description of modern artillery, even to the horses and riders, proving conclusively that it had no significance in conditions of warfare previous to this century. The "horses with power in their mouths and in their tails" symbolize cannon with muzzle and breech, "with which they do hurt."

The corruption of rulers and kings; their neglect of duty in the administration of justice; their greed for gifts and spoils, constitute a sign of the times, mentioned in Isaiah's prophecy, chapter 1: 23:—"Thy princes are rebellious and compan-

ions of thieves ; everyone loveth gifts, and followeth after rewards ; they judge not the fatherless, neither doth the cause of the widow come unto them." Enoch also said, 103: 15:—"And they helped those who robbed and devoured us, and those who diminished us, and they made secret their oppressions, so that they did not remove their yoke from us, but devoured us and scattered us and murdered us; and they kept secret our murder and did not think of it that they had lifted up their hands against us."

Christ taught that God would come in the clouds, and Joel said, in the same connection, 2: 2:—"A day of darkness and of gloominess, a day of clouds and of thick darkness, as the morning spread upon the mountains ; a great people and a strong; there hath not been ever the like, neither shall be any more after it, even to the years of many generations." By this, we are taught that clouds of spiritual ignorance will cover and shroud humanity, before the time of His coming. Cumming says in "The Seventh Vial," page 330:—"We may be more civilized, but not more sanctified; we have more knowledge, but no more grace." Although it was prophesied that the spirit of God should be poured upon the earth in the latter days, impelling men to seek the light of truth, it is also shown that until that light appears, the darkness shall be greatest. As the darkest hour is just before the dawn, so clouds should obscure spiritual vision, until the Sun of Truth shone in the East. Surrounded as we are by numbers of our fellow-

creatures who base their theories of life and religion upon materialism and pantheistic doctrines, while impelled by the Spirit of God to seek the true light, have we not perfect witness of the fulfillment of the prophet's utterance that darkness should prevail? Cumming said also, page 332 : — "So, previous to Christ's second advent in the cloud from which leaps the lightning in its splendor, ushering in the Lord of Glory, the great multitude will be found without God, without Christ and without hope in the world."

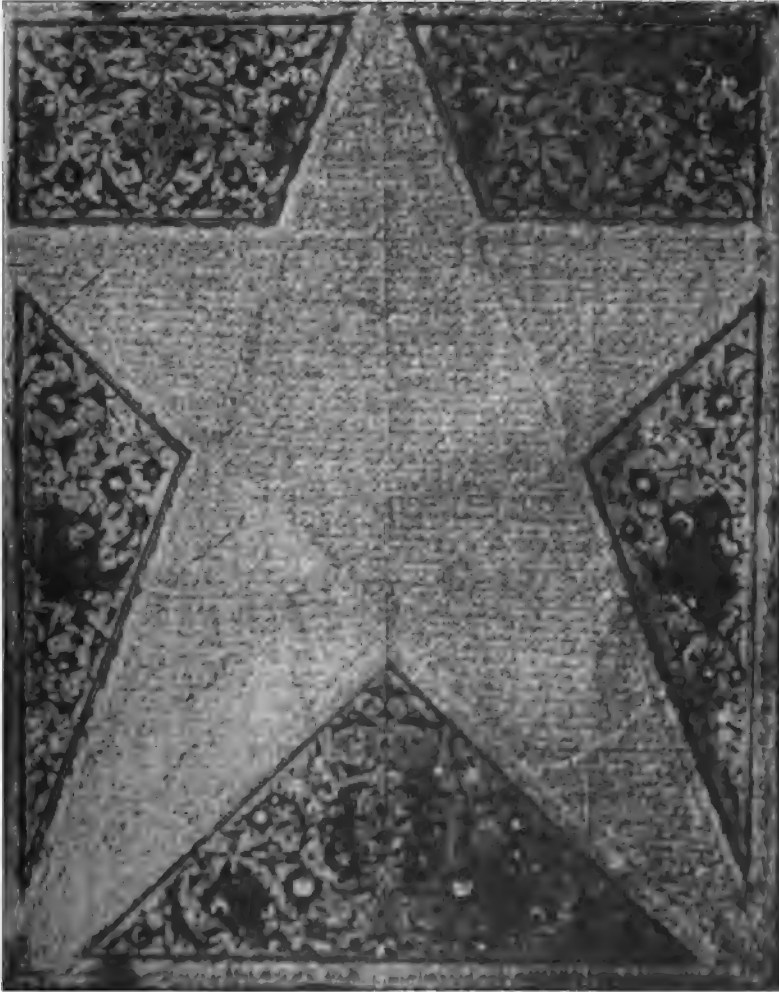
According to the Apostle Peter, a sign of the times will be the appearance of scoffers who will reject prophecy and the promise of the Kingdom. II Peter, 3:3, 4, 8, 9, 10 :—"Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, and saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation. But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is long-suffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night." Scoffing at the Word of God, is, unfortunately of such familiar and frequent occurrence, that nothing further need be said of it, except that the scoffers are themselves accomplishing prophecy to the letter.

Nahum 2:3, 4:—"The chariots shall rage in the streets, they shall jostle one against another in the broad ways; they shall seem like torches, they shall run like the lightning." This is an accurate prediction of electric cars and modern vehicles which throng our streets: a sign of the latter days, in which the Kingdom of God shall come.

These are briefly some of the "signs of the times" announced by the prophets of God, in our own scriptures; signs which have found their fulfillment in this century, and in no other; prophecies in exact harmony with the revelations of messengers of God who have appeared to other races and nations. The conclusion is irresistible, that by their teaching, God intended to convey to us, the knowledge of the time of His coming.

When Mohammed was asked by what sign we should recognize the coming of the Kingdom of God, he said:—"When you see the ships sailing upon the land, he will come." The application of the steam-engine to locomotion, dates from the first quarter of this century. Then, for the first time, railroad trains began to "sail upon the land." Mohammed said also that God would come when by "beating the iron upon the iron, you will hear news from a far distance." This prophecy was accomplished in the invention of the telegraph, which is likewise a product of this century. He said: "In those days, people will speak with their fingers," referring to the telegraph key, typewriter, or perfecting of the deaf and dumb code of communication.

The greatest sign of the Coming of the Manifestation of God, however, is the appearance of Elijah, who, according to the prophet Malachi, would come as the forerunner of the Kingdom. The following chapter will be devoted to the proof that this prophecy was literally fulfilled in this century; that Elijah has appeared upon the earth, to herald the coming of the Kingdom of God.



A TABLET IN THE HANDWRITING OF THE BAB

1

CHAPTER XXI.

THE BAB.

Malachi 3:1, 2, 5 :—"Behold I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me; and the Lord whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in; behold, he shall come, saith the Lord of Hosts. But who may abide the day of his coming? and who shall stand when he appeareth? for he is like a refiner's fire, and like fuller's soap; And I will come near to you to judgment; and I will be a swift witness against the sorcerers, and against the adulterers, and against false swearers, and against those that oppress the hireling in his wages, the widow and the fatherless and that turn aside the stranger from his right, and fear not me, saith the Lord of Hosts." Malachi 4:5, 6 :—"Behold I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord; And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse."

In 1844, the Millerites of this country, dressed themselves in white robes, gave away their earthly possessions and went forth to meet God in the air. They were disappointed, but they were not mistaken. From study of the scriptures, they ex-

pected His appearance in the clouds of heaven, whereas clouds of spiritual obscurity were meant by the prophets.

In 1844, there appeared in Persia, a young man of twenty years, who possessed the highest powers of wisdom and spiritual inspiration. He is known in history as Mirza Ali Mohammed. He called himself "The Bab," meaning the "Door" or "Gate." He was also termed "Nokteh" the "point," signifying the centre of religious truth. Mirza Alee Mohammed, the "Bab," was Elijah the forerunner of the Kingdom of God.

1844 was the year named by the prophets in which Elijah should appear. It corresponds with the year 1260 of Mohammedan chronology, computed from the Hegira or Flight of Mohammed. The Bab appeared accurately on time, crying to the people of the earth, that the Kingdom of God would shortly be established by "He whom God shall make manifest." Thousands came to hear his teaching. The burden of the message he delivered, was this: "O ye people of earth, that which was prophesied by the holy men of ancient times, will shortly come to pass; the Kingdom of God shall be established upon the earth. Prepare ye in the wilderness, the way of the Lord; make straight in the desert, a highway for our God. The Glory of God shall be revealed; all flesh shall see it together, for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it."

He proved this by signs and scriptural argument, and so great was his inspiration of utterance, that, according to historical record, in six weeks, more

than two hundred thousand people believed in his message and followed him. It is also a matter of history, that these believers were drawn chiefly from the ranks of the learned people. Doctors of the Law, the highest exponents of Mohammedan scriptures, and noted theologians of the East, allied themselves with his cause, and zealously embraced the teachings of the new faith. It was the custom of the Bab, as he traveled throughout the country, to speak, standing beside a high chair or throne, by which he symbolized the fact, that when the Manifestation of God appeared, He should be lifted above the heads of all humanity and assume spiritual dominion over the whole earth.

According to the prophet Malachi, Elijah would appear in advance of the Everlasting Father, who came to judge the world. Was John the Baptist the reincarnation of Elijah? In the first verse of the third chapter of Malachi, it is stated that "the Lord whom ye seek shall suddenly come to his temple" (the human body). John the Baptist appeared as the forerunner of Christ, but Christ, in no sense, came or claimed that he came "suddenly" into the flesh. Christ himself, in prophesying the coming of the Father, said that He should come "as a thief in the night." He taught his disciples to pray "Our Father who art in heaven, Thy kingdom come." We must conclude from this, that the coming of the kingdom prophesied by Malachi, before which Elijah should appear as the herald, was not the coming of Christ. In addition to this, Christ did not come for judgment. He said, John

8:15 :—"Ye judge after the flesh ; I judge no man." Also John 12:47 :—"And if any man hear my words and believe not, I judge him not, for I come not to judge the world but to save the world." As the coming of Elijah was to precede the judgment of the human race, it follows that John the Baptist was not Elijah. A still stronger proof that John the Baptist was not the reincarnation of Elijah, may be found in the words of John the Baptist himself. John 1:21 :—"And they asked him, What then? Art thou Elias? And he saith, I am not. Art thou that prophet? And he answered, No." If John the Baptist was Elijah, he himself would have known it, and could not have denied it.

The angel of the Lord who appeared to Zechariah in the temple, also showed plainly that John the Baptist was not Elijah, but that he should come in the spirit of Elijah. Luke 1:17 :—"And he shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord." Likewise Beha 'U'llah stated in the tablet to the Pope, that the Bab (Elijah) came in the spirit of John the Baptist.

Christ admitted that the personality of John the Baptist was not the personality of Elijah, when he asked his disciples, Matt. 16:13, 14 :—"Whom do men say that I the Son of Man am? And they said, Some say that thou art John the Baptist; some Elias; and others Jeremias, or one of the

prophets." It is evident from their answer, that John the Baptist was not Elijah, for had he been the same personality, the disciples would not have mentioned both as separate individuals. Even if the disciples were mistaken in mentioning them separately, Christ would not have accepted it, but would have corrected their misapprehension, by showing them that John and Elias were the same. We must remember also that the time of this conversation between Christ and his disciples, was long after Christ had said in Matt. 11:14:—"And if ye will receive it, this is Elias which was for to come." If Christ had taught his disciples that John the Baptist and Elias were the same personality, the disciples would neither have separated them nor have received his sanction. Malachi the prophet said that Elijah should appear before the coming of the "great and dreadful day of the Lord." We know that the coming of Christ was not a "great and dreadful day," for as Christ himself repeatedly said, he came not for judgment, but to teach the world the way of salvation.

Mirza Alee Mohammed, the Bab, the reincarnation of Elijah, was also the Imam Mahdi prophesied in the Mohammedan scriptures. Both Christian and Mohammedan scriptures announce that calamities and sufferings of the holy people should follow his appearance. This prophecy was uttered by Daniel, when he said that the "host should be trodden under foot." Daniel also said that "when he shall have accomplished to scatter the power of the holy people, then all these things shall be fin-

ished." As Malachi foretold the coming of Elijah before the great and dreadful day of the Lord, it follows that the hosts of holy people who shall suffer persecution, are to be the followers of Elijah, the Bab. This prophecy was fulfilled literally when the Bab appeared. Before describing the persecutions which attended his appearance and teachings, it is important to note that the prophecies contained in the Books of the Mohammedans, correspond exactly with those of our scriptures.

In "The Episode of the Bab" by Prof. Browne, page 259:—"In him shall be the perfection of Moses, the preciousness of Jesus, and the patience of Job; his saints shall be abased in his time, and their heads shall be exchanged as presents, even as the heads of the Turk and the Deylamite are exchanged as presents; they shall be slain and burned, and shall be afraid, fearful and dismayed; the earth shall be dyed with their blood, and lamentations and wailing shall prevail amongst their women; these are my saints indeed."

Mirza Alee Mohammed, the Bab, was born in the year 1235 A. H., on the first day of Muharram, or in the year 1820 A. D. He was descended from the pure lineage of Beni Hashim, a Seyyid or descendant of the family of the prophet Mohammed. He was considered a prophet like unto Abraham, because he traveled about, promulgating the truth of God. He was like Moses, for he possessed the power of argument and conviction, or "the stick." He was like Mohammed, for, previous to the commencement of his teachings, he was a merchant.

He was like Christ, for with Christ, he claimed to be simply the "Door" or "Way" to God; like Christ, he waited for the time of the commencement of his ministry; like Christ, he was martyred in the attitude of crucifixion.

When still a child, his father, Seyyid Mohammed Riza, died, leaving him in Shiraz with his uncle, who was a merchant. He was known and esteemed widely among his acquaintances, for his gentleness and integrity. After a pilgrimage to Mecca, he began to declare to the people, that he possessed the rank of "Bab-hood," just as Christ declared that he was the "Way." By this, he meant that he was the channel through which the world should receive the revelation of the "Word hidden behind the veils of Might," the mouthpiece through which the Lord of Hosts should manifest His grace to the people of the earth.

Through the Bab, as through Christ, God the Father manifested Himself to the human race. Christ showed in his teachings, that he was not speaking from himself, but the Father which abode in him, was doing the work. The Bab claimed the same thing, when he said "O Remnant of God, I am wholly sacrificed to Thee; I am content with curses in Thy way; I crave naught but to be slain in Thy love, and God the Supreme, sufficeth as an eternal protection."

Christ declared his mission and began his work after forty days fast in the wilderness, previous to which time, he had evidently laid no claim to any special mission or message. The Bab, likewise,

did not announce his message until, at the age of twenty-four, the word of God revealed to him his mission. Although lacking instruction and education, his elucidations of the Koran texts, his sermons and prayers in the Arabic language, which was not his native tongue, are sufficient proof of his inspiration. The Doctors and high exponents of the Koran, considered his knowledge supernatural, many of them embracing his teachings, others rejecting him, and showing their hatred by unparalleled bitterness of persecution.

In his book (*The Beyan*), the Bab himself has said, concerning his lack of education (see translation by Prof. Browne in "*Episode of the Bab*," page 219) "And if anyone should reflect on the appearance of this Tree, he will, without doubt, admit the loftiness of God's religion. For in one from whose life (only) twenty-four years had passed, who was devoid of those sciences wherein all are learned, who now recites verses after such fashion without thought or hesitation, who in the course of five hours writes a thousand verses of supplication without pause of the pen, who produces commentaries and learned treatises of so high a degree of wisdom and understanding of the Divine Unity, that doctors and philosophers confess their inability to comprehend those passages, there is no doubt that all of this is from God. What pains do these doctors take who study diligently from the beginning to the end of their lives, when writing a line of Arabic! Yet after all (the result) is but words

which are unworthy of mention. All these things are for a proof unto the people ; else is the religion of God too mighty and too glorious for one to be able to understand it by aught other than itself ; rather by it, is all else understood."

The persecutors of the Bab accused him frequently of claiming to be "Lord of the age, or the Manifestation of God ;" but he always answered them that he was only the "gate" of the Manifestation. It is clear that many of the Mohammedan records concerning his claims, are misunderstandings of his utterances, just as Christ was misunderstood, when he said "I and the Father are one" and "He who hath seen me hath seen the Father." As Christ's intention was to show plainly that he was not the Father, but that he taught in unity with God, so also the Bab taught that he was in unity with the Lord of the Ages. He said, when he nominated his successor, "if He whom God shall manifest should appear in His power in thy time, abrogate the Beyan." The spirit of his teachings throughout was, that when God the Father should manifest Himself, the Beyan should be annulled, and men must hearken to His teachings only. He also said that a thousand perusals of the Beyan, are not equal to the reading of one verse that shall be revealed by "Him whom God shall manifest." In the Beyan, it is written "All splendor of the Beyan is 'He whom God shall manifest.' The whole Beyan revolves around the saying 'whom God shall manifest ;' the gaze of the Beyan is not extended save towards 'Him

whom God shall manifest,' for none but He hath raised or doth raise up, even as none but He hath sent or doth send it down. And the Beyan and such as are believers therein yearn more after Him than the yearning of any lover after his beloved." He continually belittled himself, claiming he was but a "letter in that Mighty Book and a drop of water in that Endless Ocean."

In spite of the severe persecution by the doctors and the governors, the believers in the Bab became more energetic and powerful in the diffusion of his teachings throughout the oriental countries, until the clamor of this movement commanded the attention of the Shah of Persia, who sent Seyyid Yahya of Darab, one of the highest doctors, to question the Bab as to his teaching. This learned man became convinced of the truth of the Bab's message, and allied himself with the cause as a zealous believer and preacher. Mulla Mohammed Ali, a celebrated divine from Zanjan, was likewise converted, and became one of the greatest leaders of Babism. This was the experience of hundreds of others equally wise and gifted with religious knowledge; they became ardent believers, sacrificing everything in the cause of the Bab, going triumphantly to their death as martyrs. Never were there such martyrs as these. In *Tarikh-I-Jadid*, page 233, "More than four hundred eminent divines, remarkable alike for the soundness of their judgment and the extent of their learning, bear witness to the truth of His Holiness the First Point (The Bab) and, for the awakening of their

fellowmen, sever all worldly ties, and willingly quaff the draught of martyrdom."

The persecution of the Babis became widespread and universal, and history records no bloodier pages than the martyrdom of these holy people, who gave their lives as a witness of their belief in the Truth of God. In "Tarikh-I-Jadid," page 24, "About the time of the appearance of Seyyid Ali Mohammed the Bab, when all Persia was convulsed, I arrived by way of Constantinople and Trebizonde at Tabriz. Here I saw with my own eyes and heard with my own ears, how the Babis were everywhere hunted down, and, wherever found, doomed to death, without inquiry or examination, by the ecclesiastical or civil authorities. Some were sawn asunder, some strangled, some shot, or blown from the mouths of cannons. This period of massacre and plunder endured for a long time, and in Yezd, Shiraz, Tabriz, Niriz, Mazandaran and Zanzan, there was strife, bloodshed, massing of troops, and slaughter of the people. None were spared. Those who bore a grudge against anyone, as well as bands of scoundrels bent on plunder, had now their opportunity, for whomsoever they pointed out to the farrashes as a Babi, was put to death without more ado."

Again on page 108. "But in truth I know not what had been shown to these people, or what they had seen, that they came forth to battle with such alacrity and joy, and engaged so eagerly and gladly in the strife, without displaying in their countenances, any traces of fear or apprehension.

One would imagine that in their eyes, the keen sword and the blood-spilling dagger were but means to the attainment of everlasting life, so eagerly did their necks and bosoms welcome them, as they circled like salamanders round the fiery hail of bullets. And the astonishing thing was that all these men were scholars and men of learning, sedentary recluses of the college and the cloister, delicately nurtured and of weakly frame, inured (indeed) to austerity, but strangers to the roar of cannon, the rattle of musketry, and the field of battle. During the last three months of the siege, moreover, they were absolutely without bread and water, and were reduced to the extreme of weakness through lack of even such pittance of food as is sufficient to sustain human life. Notwithstanding this, it seemed as if in time of a battle, a new spirit was breathed into their frames, insomuch that the imagination of man cannot conceive the vehemence of their courage and valor. They used to expose their bodies to the bullets and cannonballs, not only fearlessly and courageously, but eagerly and joyously, seeming to regard the battle-field as a banquet, and to be bent on casting away their lives. And withal, these men were for the most part honorable amongst their people, delicately nurtured in the lap of luxury, accustomed to comfort if not to splendor, highly considered and esteemed by their neighbors, and in the enjoyment of fame, influence and high authority. Yet they manfully severed all worldly ties, abandoned every hope and ambition of their own,

and for nine months were exposed to all manner of affliction, suffering such long stress of hunger, that they were content to eat grass and the flesh of horses and to drink each day a single cup of warm water."

Again, page 67 ;—" And so much of their blood was collected in a hollow of the ground, that the truth of a tradition which affirms that in that land shall be such bloodshed that a horse shall wade knee-deep in gore, was made manifest."

Also page 128 (note) :—" Their persecutors, having captured and killed the men, seized and slew forty women and children, in the following manner: They placed them in the midst of a cave, heaped up in the cave a vast quantity of firewood, poured naphtha over the faggots strewn around, and set fire to it. One of those who took part in this deed, relates as follows: 'After two or three days I ascended that mountain and removed the door from the cave. I saw that the fire had sunk down into the ashes; but all of those women with their children, were seated each in some corner, clasping their little ones to their bosoms, and sitting around in a circle, just as they were when we left them. Some, as though in despair or in mourning, had suffered their heads to sink to their knees in grief, and all retained the postures they had assumed. I was filled with amazement, thinking that the fire had not burned them. Full of apprehension and awe, I entered. Then I saw that all were burned and charred to a cinder, yet they had never made a movement which would cause the crumbling

away of the bodies. As soon as I touched them with my hands, however, they crumbled away to ashes. And all of us, when we had seen this, repented what we had done. But of what avail was this?'''

Also page 174: "Enmity and war have been rife for nearly thirty years, during which time nearly a hundred thousand souls have been slain or scattered abroad in distant and foreign lands. Had these been spared, the number of them and their offspring, would now have amounted to 500,000."

The details of the persecution of the Babis, do not lie within the scope of this chapter; they can be found in "The Episode of the Bab," by Prof. Edward G. Browne of Cambridge University, England, from which volume the following quotations are taken: "One of the seven great martyrs, Haji Mulla Isma'il of Kum, while on the way to his execution, in answer to one of the mob, who shouted that they were Babis and madmen, replied: 'Yes, we are Babis; but mad we are not. By God, O People, it is for your awakening and enlightenment that we have foregone life, wealth, wife, child, and have shut our eyes to the world and its citizens, that perchance ye may be warned and may escape from uncertainty and error, that ye may fall to making inquiry, that ye may recognize the TRUTH as it meet, and that ye may no longer be veiled therefrom.'

"Now when they were come to the place of execution, one came to Haji Mulla Isma'il and said,

'Such an one of your friends will, on condition of your recanting, give a sum of money in order that they may not kill you. To save your life, what harm is there in saying merely "I am not a Babi?"' To this, however, Haji Mulla Isma'il would by no means consent; and, when greatly importuned, he drew himself up and said 'O zephyr! Say from me to Isma'il destined for sacrifice, to return alive from the street of the friend is not the condition of love.'"

Another one of the seven great martyrs, Mirza Kurban Ali, when urged to save his life by recanting and renouncing his belief in the Bab, replied: "This drop of blood—this poor life—is naught. Were I possessed of the lordship of the world, and had I a thousand lives, I would freely cast them before the feet of His friends." So, when they perceived that their efforts were of no avail, they desisted therefrom, and signified to the executioner that he should proceed with his work. The first blow struck, only wounded the old man's neck and cast his turban to the ground. He raised his head and exclaimed:

"O happy that intoxicated lover who at the feet of the Friend knoweth not whether it be his head or his turban which he casteth!" Then the executioner quickly dealt him another blow, which slew him. Then came the turn of the Bab's uncle, Haji Mirza Ali. A merchant of his acquaintance wished to ransom him for the sum of three hundred tumans, but he declared that to suffer martyrdom was his greatest desire. Then he took off his tur-

ban, and, raising his face towards heaven, exclaimed, "O God, Thou art witness of how they are slaying the son of Thy Most Honorable Prophet without fault on his part." Then he turned to the executioner and recited this verse :

"How long shall grief of separation from him alay me ?
Cut off my head, that Love may bestow on me a head."

When he had said this, he too submitted himself to the executioner's hands.

Concerning Kurratu' L'Ayn, the great prophetess, Prof. Browne says : "The appearance of such a woman as Kurratu' L'Ayn is in any country and any age a rare phenomenon, but in such a country as Persia, it is a prodigy—nay, almost a miracle. Alike in virtue of her marvelous beauty, her rare intellectual gifts, her fervid eloquence, her fearless devotion, and her glorious martyrdom, she stands forth incomparable and immortal amidst her countrywomen. Had the Babi religion no other claim to greatness, this were sufficient, that it produced a heroine like Kurratu' L'Ayn."

There is no higher proof that the message of the Bab was the power and inspiration from God, than this unparalleled record of Babi martyrdom. These triumphant souls were the saints who were promised by the prophets, to come at the time of the establishment of His Kingdom upon the earth ; these are the holy people of whom Daniel prophesied, when he said that they should be scattered, persecuted and trodden under foot ; these are the holy ones, of whom our Great Master, Jesus Christ, prophesied in Matt. 24:9:—"Then shall they de-

liver you up to be afflicted and shall kill you, and ye shall be hated of all nations for My Name's sake." The pages of history which record their sufferings and glorifications, furnish the fulfillment of the prophecy that the day of the coming of God should be a dark and dreadful day, "A day of darkness and thick clouds." There could be no more perfect evidence of the spiritual ignorance of men, and the coming of God in the clouds ; of Cain, the party of darkness, rising in his wrath and slaying his brother Abel. It is a matter of record by profane historians, that many of these martyrs proved their inspiration as the prophets of God, before they met their deaths. The record of many of their prophecies will be found in *Tarikh-I-Jadid*.

In the midst of these tribulations, calamities and bloodshed, the Bab himself was not affected or grieved. By order of the ruler of Persia, he had been imprisoned in the castle of Maku and Chihrik, where, day and night, in great rapture, he occupied himself in meditation and repeating the qualities and attributes which should characterize "He whom God shall manifest." He said, "Episode of the Bab," page 18: "Though the ocean of woe rageth on every side, and the bolts of fate follow in quick succession, and the darkness of griefs and afflictions invade soul and body, yet is my heart brightened by the remembrance of Thy countenance and my soul is as a rose-garden from the perfume of Thy nature."

The prophecies of the Bab concerning the martyrdom of his disciples, his own death, and the

fulfillment of his prophecies, are historically recorded in the *Tarikh-I-Jadid*. A thorough examination of the *Beyan*, will show us that all its splendor epitomizes in the Manifestation of God, Whose coming is foretold. One of the statements of the *Beyan* is as follows: "I swear by the Most Holy Essence of God (Glorious and Splendid is He), that in the day of the Manifestation, if one should hear a single verse from Him and recite it, it is better than that he should recite the *Beyan* a thousand times."

As Christ declared that his mission upon earth was to preach the glad tidings, the gospel of the Kingdom of God the Father, so, likewise, the Bab declared his mission to be the announcement of the coming of that Kingdom. Although he knew that Beha Ullah was already upon the earth, having received this knowledge by spiritual revelation, and by other communication from Beha Ullah through Mulla Abdal Karim, yet, for the fulfillment of the will of God, and in accordance with prophecies of the Old and New Testaments, inasmuch as the time for the Manifestation had not come, he did not reveal his knowledge of this fact, to the world.

The Bab was executed in 1850. We quote the account of his execution from Prof. Browne, page 43: "Next day the chief of the farrashes delivered over the Bab and a young man named Aka Muhammed Ali, who was of a noble family of Tabriz, to Sam Khan, colonel of the Christian regiment of Urumiyya, at the sentences of the learned divine Mulla Muhammed of Mamakan, of the second

ecclesiastical authority Mirza Bakir, and of the third ecclesiastical authority Mulla Murtaza-Kuli and others. An iron nail was hammered into the middle of the staircase of the very cell wherein they were imprisoned, and two ropes were hung down. By one rope, the Bab was suspended and by the other rope Aka Muhammed Ali, both being firmly bound in such wise that the head of the young man was on the Bab's breast. The surrounding housetops billowed with teeming crowds. A regiment of soldiers ranged itself in three files. The first file fires ; then the second file, and then the third file discharged volleys. From the fire of these volleys, a mighty smoke was produced. When the smoke cleared away they saw the young man standing and the Bab seated by the side of his amanuensis, Aka Seyyid Huseyn, in the very cell from the staircase of which they had suspended them. To neither one of them had the slightest injury resulted. Sam Khan the Christian asked to be excused ; the turn of service came to another regiment, and the chief of the farrashes withheld his hand. Aka Jan Beg of Khamsa, colonel of the body-guard, advanced ; and they again bound the Bab together with that young man to the same nail. The Bab uttered certain words which those few who knew Persian understood, while the rest heard but the sound of his voice.

"The colonel of the regiment appeared in person ; and it was before noon on the twenty-eighth of Shaban in the year (A. H.) one thousand two hundred and sixty-six (July 9th, 1850). Suddenly

he gave orders to fire. At this volley, the bullets produced such an effect that the breasts (of the victims) were riddled, and their limbs were completely dissected, except their faces, which were but little marred."

One of the most vivid prophecies of Mohammed, was in connection with the manner of the Bab's death. When he was asked how the Bab should die, he answered : " He will be suspended like Christ," and then added, after a pause : "This will not kill him, but that which will kill him is the pestle of a mortar, which, with a great noise, will go out and kill him." The fulfilment of this prophecy was literal, for, like Christ, the Bab was suspended in the attitude of crucifixion, but his death was from gunshot and bullet, the "pestle flying out of the mortar, with a loud noise." When Mohammed uttered this prophecy, neither guns nor gunpowder were in existence, and he used the most available symbols to describe them.

The hatred of the Mohammedans and many other enemies of the Babis, led to false reports concerning the communism and morality of these people of God, which false accusations have been refuted by unbiased historians, who have studied this sect thoroughly and conscientiously. It is a matter of record now, that the Babis were remarkable for their devotion, generosity, purity and integrity of character. Prof. Browne says : " Now the only sense in which the Babis can be said to be communistic, is the same sense as the early Christians might be so described ; namely, in a readiness

to share their possessions with one another, and a generous liberality in helping each other, such as is often witnessed in young and struggling faiths." Upon the subject of immorality, Prof. Browne also says: "It will be remembered that precisely similar accusations were made against the early Christians, probably for similar reasons. Of course I do not mean to imply that individual members of the sect may not be guilty of immoral actions, for amongst those who profess any religion, some persons may always be found whose conduct is at variance with the essential principles of morality. What I do confidently assert is, that those who, professing to be Babis, are guilty of immorality, are contravening precepts of their religion."

The real light and truth of Babism, as founded and taught by the Bab himself, has suffered partial eclipse, in the fact that many sufists and mystics allied themselves with the sect corrupting the teachings of the Bab, by proclaiming principles of pantheism, coupled with various superstitions and outside beliefs. This has led to the opinion by some writers, that the Babis had pantheistic tendencies, an error attributable to the sufists, who believe and teach that there is a divine spark in man, and, by cultivating it, we may obtain a degree of annihilation in God. This has been the experience historically, of the teachings of all the messengers of God ; but error, misinterpretation and injection of dogma, are not impeachments which can be laid upon the Truth of God. Truth is of God and from Him. Complexity, error and

mistake arise from the egotism of man's opinions. The Bab, Christ, and all the prophets of God have taught that we shall be naturalized into the Divine Nature, as the children of God.

In the following chapter upon Beha 'U'llah, "The Manifestation," we shall see the providence of the Everlasting Father, and the evidence of His love toward the children of men. He has prevented the Truth spoken by the Bab, from falling into error and obscurity, for He has taught and directed us toward the right path. Through Him, the Divine Wisdom has been unfolded, error annulled and the Truth which shall accomplish the judgment of the world, placed forever beyond the ability of men to obscure it. By Him, we have been guided to the reality of spiritual understanding. By Him, the foundations of Babism and all other religions of the world have been incorporated into the true religion of God. In Him, prophecy has found its completion and fulfilment. By His coming, He has proved the message of Elijah the Bab and the prophecy of Malachi: "Behold I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord. And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the hearts of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse."

CHAPTER XXII.

THE MANIFESTATION.

Unto us a child was born; unto us a Son was given; and the government was upon His shoulder; His name was called "Wonderful, Counsellor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace."

"The Sun of Wisdom has shone in the horizon of the Phenomenal World; the Most Mighty Luminary has appeared upon the throne of humanity."

Beha 'U'llah, the Manifestation of the Everlasting Father, was born November 12th, 1817 (1233 A. H. Muharram 2d), in the city of Teheran, which the Bab, on account of His appearance there, called the "Holy Land." By birth and parentage, He was a Prince of the high lineage; the son of Mirza Buzurg of the House of Nuri; His name, Mirza Huseyn Ali, afterward Beha 'U'llah (The Glory of God). From His childhood He was gifted with supreme powers, adorned with divinity and characterized by purity and nobility. In "A Traveler's Narrative," page 57, Prof. Edward G. Browne says: "Although He combined lofty lineage with high connection, and although His ancestors were men of note in Persia, and universally sought after, yet He was not of a race of doctors nor a family of scholars. Now this youth was

from his earliest adolescence celebrated amongst those of the ministerial class, both relatives and strangers, for single-mindedness, and was from childhood pointed out as remarkable for sagacity and held in regard in the eyes of the wise. He did not, however, after the fashion of His ancestors, desire elevation to lofty ranks nor seek advancement to splendid but transient positions. His extreme aptitude was nevertheless admitted by all, and His excessive acuteness and intelligence were universally avowed. In the eyes of the common folk He enjoyed a wonderful esteem, and in all gatherings and assemblies He had a marvelous speech and delivery. Notwithstanding lack of instruction and education, such was the keenness of His penetration and the readiness of His apprehension that when during His youthful prime He appeared in assemblies where questions of divinity and points of metaphysics were being discussed, and, in presence of a great concourse of doctors and scholars, loosed His tongue, all those present were amazed, accounting this as a sort of prodigy beyond the discernment natural to the human race. From His early years He was the hope of His kindred and the unique one of His family and race; nay, their refuge and shelter. However, in spite of these conditions and circumstances, as He wore a kulah on His head and locks flowing over His shoulder, no one imagined that He would become the source of such matters, or that the waves of His flood would reach the zenith of this firmament."

Soon after the appearance of the "Bab," in 1844,

Beha 'U'llah (The Glory is to Him), allied Himself with the new faith, and arose in His mighty power, to uphold the message revealed by the forerunner of the Kingdom of God. It is now evident, that the power behind the Bab, the inspiration of his utterance, the truth which led men triumphantly to quaff the cup of martyrdom, was the influence and divinity of Beha 'U'llah. By the majesty of His personality and the glory of His wisdom, doctors and learned people, rich and poor, high and low were alike persuaded to the truth; from the ocean of His knowledge, the spiritual and ethical principles which now constitute the universal religion of the world, were revealed.

In 1850 and 1851, the persecution of the Babis was renewed with greater intensity than ever, on account of an attempt upon the life of the Shah, by an insane believer in that faith. At that time, Beha 'U'llah was imprisoned four months, fulfilling the prophecy of Isaiah, who said that He should be "humiliated because of our rebellions." An investigation having established the fact that the would-be assassin had acted entirely upon his own responsibility, proving beyond question that there had been no conspiracy among the Babis against the Shah, Beha was released, and the restoration of his property, which had been confiscated by the authorities, was ordered. This He refused to accept, and, shortly afterward, in the year 1852, He withdrew from the kingdom of Persia, under escort of the Shah's guards, to the Shrines of Kerbela and Nejef, near Baghdad, in the land of Boz-

rah. By this, He fulfilled the Bab's prophecy, uttered in an epistle to one of the believers, that "to meet the Manifestation of God, you must come by the way of Bozrah." This was also a fulfillment of Isaiah's prophecy, 63 : 1 : — "Who is this that cometh from Edom with dyed garments from Bozrah? This that is glorious in His apparel, traveling in the greatness of His strength? I that speak in righteousness, Mighty to save."

The departure of Beha from Persia, was the commencement of His wanderings in the wilderness of exile for forty years. According to prophecy, He should appear upon the earth for that period, as the Manifestation of God, the literal fulfillment of which began in 1852, and ended when He left the world in 1892.

After His arrival in Baghdad, the glory of His name spread throughout the land of Irak, and thousands from all parts of the country, received generous and loving treatment from His Divine Presence. In the beginning of the year 1853, He revealed Himself to His circle of Believers, as "He whom God shall manifest;" the appearance of the Everlasting Father, of whom Isaiah, Christ and all the prophets had written. This Manifestation of His Divinity, corresponds exactly with the time appointed by the Bab, who said that He would reveal Himself after the numerical value of the word "Heen," which means "Awhile," that is to say, in the year 1269 A. H. (1853 A. D.)

After this event, Beha 'U'llah withdrew from His followers, to Sarkalu in Kurdistan, where He lived

in the mountains, remote from human habitation, occasionally visiting the town of Suleymaniyye, where He gathered about Him a strong following of believers, and formulated the Truth which has since spread throughout the earth.

His precepts, uttered to His followers at that time, embody the highest moralities and spiritual ethics which have appeared upon the earth. His believers were enjoined to study the arts and sciences of all nationalities, to deal with all people in the spirit of love and equity ; to desire the good of humanity and obey the laws of temporal government. During the eleven years which Beha spent in Irak el-Arabi, His sect gained an immense increase in numbers. His supreme knowledge and wisdom threw light upon all difficult theological questions and explained deepest points of divinity, which, in their mystery, had baffled the sages of all previous time. From Kurdistan, He returned to Baghdad, where He continued the organization of His Truth and Teachings. In 1863, after receiving a summons to Constantinople from the Sultan, Beha 'U'llah again revealed Himself to His followers, as the Manifestation of God. This general Manifestation to His people, took place in a grove or garden near the river Chebar, outside the city of Baghdad, and is in direct fulfillment of the prophetic vision revealed to Ezekiel in this same spot, nearly three thousand years before. Ezekiel 1 : 1, 4, 5 :—“ Now it came to pass in the thirtieth year, in the fourth month, in the fifth day of the month, as I was among the cap-

tives by the river of Chebar, that the heavens were opened, and I saw visions of God. And I looked, and behold, a whirlwind came out of the north, a great cloud, and a fire infolding itself, and a brightness was about it, and out of the midst thereof as the color of amber, out of the midst of the fire. Also out of the midst thereof came the likeness of four living creatures. And this was their appearance; they had the likeness of a man." Following these verses, is a description of the chariot of God, which is the symbol of His Kingdom upon earth. The prophet continues in the 26th verse:—"And above the firmament that was over their heads was the likeness of a throne, as the appearance of a sapphire stone; and upon the likeness of the throne was the likeness as the appearance of a man above upon it." 28:—"This was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the Lord. And when I saw it, I fell upon my face, and I heard a voice of one that spake."

In 1863, Beha 'U'llah and His followers journeyed to Constantinople, where they were received with the highest courtesy and consideration, by the Ottoman Government. They remained in Constantinople a few months, after which, on account of their numbers and influence, Beha Ullah was ordered to Adrianople, in the District of Roumelia.

During His residence in Constantinople, many of the Turkish officials, nobles and learned people attained the great honor and privilege of visiting Him at His residence. Some of them having

urged Him to call upon the Sultan, Beha replied that those who wished to see Him must come to Him. Upon one occasion, the Mohammedan doctors and ministers asked Him by what signs or works, He could prove to them that He was indeed the promised Manifestation of God. He answered, "By what sign do you believe in Mohammed?" They replied, "By this, the Koran, the greatest sign, convincing proof and miracle of Mohammed's inspiration." Beha 'U'llah thereupon produced a book of texts in Arabic, of such infinitely higher style and greater wisdom, that the Koran was completely eclipsed. By this and other overwhelming evidence of His greatness, such consternation was produced among the rigorous Mohammedan leaders, that immediate steps were taken to curtail His power and rid Constantinople of His presence. After consultation, it was decreed that He should be banished to Adrianople, upon the charge that He was a magician, and a menace to the Mohammedan religion. The intrigue which accomplished this decree of banishment, was instituted by officials of the Persian embassy resident in Constantinople. In His banishment from the capital of Turkey, Beha fulfilled the prophecy contained in the second Psalm, 1 : 2, 3, 4 :— which, biblical critics declare, has never been fulfilled by any historical personage. The prophet revealed that the kings and rulers should conspire against the Lord and His Anointed (His Manifestation). Psalms 2 : 1-4 :—"Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing? The kings of the earth set

themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the Lord, and against his anointed, saying Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us. He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh; the Lord shall have them in derision."

It is a matter of fact and record that the edict summoning Beha from Baghdad to Constantinople, was a joint agreement between the rulers of Persia and Turkey, and that in issuing the decree of banishment from Constantinople to Adrianople, the Sultan was encouraged by certain ambassadors of European countries.

The effect of Beha's banishment to Adrianople, however, served but to inflame the interest of the people in his claim and teachings; the fire which God had kindled to burn eternally, was not diminished in the least. From outside and unbiased record of their stay in Constantinople, it is shown that Beha's followers behaved with calmness, patience and integrity,—in strong contrast with the venomous and intemperate hatred of the Moham-medans, who lost no opportunity of attributing to them, charges of sedition, strife and mischief against the government. In Adrianople, the sect continued to be characterized by dignity and love for humanity, until they received the praise, respect and reverence of everybody, including the Turkish officials who had been appointed to watch them closely. At this time, pilgrimages were made to Adrianople from all countries of the East, by believers who were eager to see His face.

The third Manifestation of Beha 'U'llah, by which He announced to the whole world, His Coming and Kingdom, took place in Adrianople, in 1867. By this Manifestation, He claimed to be the Revelation of the Everlasting Father to the world; the fulfillment of the utterances of Christ and the prophets. At that time, He began to declare to all kings, rulers and people of the earth, that He was the Expected One of all ages and religions. From Him, were sent out messages and tablets to the rulers of all nations, commanding them to enter into His Kingdom and drink of the Water of Life, in order that they might live with Him as His children, here and hereafter, now and forever.

1867 was the year mentioned by Christ in the Book of Revelations, as will be shown in the chapter upon "The Time of His Coming."

According to prophecy, Satan, the "adversary" of God, should appear in the Kingdom, at the time of the "Manifestation;" and, refusing to acknowledge His authority of revelation, would be cast out, losing the name which had been bestowed upon him. This name is the "Morning Star," "Sun of the East" or "Subh-i-Ezel." This casting down of Satan out of Heaven, is the battle between Michael and His angels against the "adversary" of God. By it, we are taught that he should be cast from his high spiritual position, into the earth, meaning that he shall become earthly, materially-minded, and belonging to the party of Cain. In the 49th chapter of Jeremiah, the adversary is

given the name of "Esau," in contradistinction to the Manifestation, who is termed "Jacob," implying that the "Satan" of the Kingdom, would be a brother of the Manifestation. All these prophecies were fulfilled literally in Subh-i-Ezel, a brother of Beha 'U'llah, who had been appointed by the Bab as his successor, but who, after the death of the Bab, refused to acknowledge "He whom God shall manifest," thereby accomplishing his own dethronement and by his wickedness, being cast out of the Kingdom of God.

Many other prophecies were fulfilled in the Third or Universal Manifestation by Beha 'U'llah, in 1867. As already shown, 1867-68 were conspicuous years for calamities, earthquakes, etc., directly in accordance with the utterances of Christ, Daniel and others.

Owing to the immense increase in the number of believers who followed the Truth embodied in the divinity and teachings of Beha 'U'llah, the Turkish government, acting again upon the advice of foreign ambassadors, decided to deport Him to Syria. Accordingly, in August, 1868, He was conveyed by steamer from Gallipoli to Akka, via Alexandria, while Subh-i-Ezel with his family and a few adherents, was banished by the same edict, to Famagusta, in the Island of Cyprus. Beha 'U'llah's journey by sea, had not escaped the attention of the prophets. In Habakkuk, 3d chapter, the coming of God to His Kingdom is graphically pictured, culminating in "Thou didst walk through the sea with thine horses, through the heap of great waters."

In the prophecies of Mohammed, it is stated that God "will come to His Kingdom, riding upon a horse out of whose mouth the smoke goes forth." This was literally fulfilled in the steamship which bore Beha 'U'llah to the Holy City, Akka.

Zechariah 9:9 :—"Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem; behold thy King cometh unto thee; He is just and having salvation; lowly and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt, the foal of an ass." Beha 'U'llah left Haifa for Akka, the New Jerusalem, mounted upon a white ass which had never borne a man. This animal had been led from Persia, by land, for that purpose.

During the latter part of His stay at Adrianople, Beha 'U'llah composed an epistle to the King of Persia, embracing the principles of His word and revelation to humanity. Upon the back of it, He wrote that "one pure of heart and life, dedicated to God, and ready to sacrifice his life in the cause of God, must, from his own will and accord, offer himself to deliver this message to the King." Mirza Badi, a Persian, son of Haji Abdul Majid, offered himself as the bearer of this message. Under command of the Sultan, Beha 'U'llah had been confined in the barracks of the soldiers, placed under guard and subjected to such stringent regulations, that even the gates of the city were closed to all Persians. So severe were the military restrictions, that Beha's followers were accustomed to congregate at a place outside the city walls, facing the barracks, from which the windows of the Mani-

festation's quarters could be seen. From this place, they prayed to Him. When Mirza Badi reached Akka, he passed through the city gates without opposition or question, entered the barracks, and stood before Beha 'U'llah, offering himself as the bearer of the message to the King of Persia. The Manifestation then informed him that his reward would be martyrdom. Badi announced that he was ready to die ; the tablet was given to him, and he passed out through the guard and gates of the city, upon his fatal journey of love. Reaching Teheran, he waited three days, fasting, upon a rock, expecting the royal presence. When the King passed, he commanded one of his attendants to make inquiry as to the purpose of the solitary watcher upon the rock. Badi replied that he desired to deliver a letter with his own hands to the King. Having delivered his message, the youthful martyr was killed with hot irons, helping his executioners by applying them himself to his blistering flesh. It is recorded by historians, that the King, having read the epistle, expressed deep regret for his death. The following passages are quoted from a translation of the epistle to the King of Persia. by Prof. Browne :—

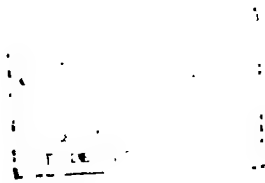
HE IS GOD, EXALTED IS HE.

“It hath been known that God (Glorious is His mention), is sanctified from the world and what is therein, and that the meaning of “victory” is not this, that anyone should fight or strive with any-



MIRZA BADI

The Carrier of the Message to the Shah of Persia, in Chains.



one. The Lord of He doeth what He will, hath committed the kingdom of creation, both land and sea, into the hand of kings, and they are the manifestations of the Divine Power according to the degrees of their rank. Verily He is the Potent, the Sovereign, but that which God (Glorious is His mention), hath desired for Himself, is the hearts of His servants, which are treasures of praise and love of the Lord, and stores of divine knowledge and wisdom. The will of the Eternal King hath ever been to purify the hearts of (His) servants from the promptings of the world and what is therein, so that they may be prepared for illumination by the effulgences of the Lord of the Names and Attributes. Therefore must no stranger find his way into the city of the heart, so that the Incomparable Friend may come unto His own place—that is, the effulgence of His Names and Attributes, not His Essence (exalted is He) for that Peerless King hath been, and will be, holy for everlasting above ascent or descent. Therefore today "Victory" neither hath been nor will be opposition to anyone, nor strife with any person; but rather what is well pleasing is that the cities of (men's) hearts, which are under the dominion of the hosts of selfishness and lust, should be subdued by the sword of the Word, of Wisdom, and of Exhortation. Everyone, then, who desireth "victory," must first subdue the city of his own heart with the sword of spiritual truth and of the Word, and must protect it from remembering aught beside God; afterwards let him turn his regards toward the cities of (other's) hearts.

That is what is intended by "victory;" sedition hath never been nor is pleasing to God, and that which certain ignorant persons formerly wrought, was never approved. If ye be slain for His good pleasure, verily it is better for you than that ye should slay. Today the friends of God must appear in such fashion amidst (God's) servants, that by their actions they may lead all unto the pleasure of the Lord of Glory. I swear by the Sun of the Horizon of Holiness, that the friends of God never have regarded nor will regard the earth or its transitory riches. God hath ever regarded the hearts of (His) servants, and this too by reason of (His) most great favor that perchance mortal souls may be cleansed and sanctified from earthly states, and may attain to everlasting places. But that Real King is in Himself sufficient unto Himself (and independent) of all; neither doth any advantage accrue to Him from the love of contingent beings, nor doth any hurt befall Him from their hatred. All earthly places appear through Him and unto Him return, and God singly and alone abideth in His own place which is holy above space and time, mention and utterance, sign, description and definition, height and depth. And none knoweth this save Him and whosoever hath knowledge of the Book. There is no God but Him, the Mighty, the Bountiful."

Akka is a city upon the Syrian coast, nine miles from the foot of Mount Carmel. It is mentioned in scripture by its Greek name, Ptolemais. During the Crusades, it was the headquarters of the

Knights Templar, from whom it derived its name, Saint Jean d'Arc. It is a fortified city, celebrated for its unhealthy climate and filthiness; the Turkish city of exile and place of confinement for prisoners of the government. To this miserable spot, Beha 'U'llah and His followers were sent, with the object of destroying them by disease and sickness; this fact accomplishing the prophecy of Isaiah 53: 7-9:—(Literal translation by Prof. Cheyne) "He was treated with rigor, but He resigned Himself, and opened not His mouth. Like a lamb that is led to the slaughter, and like a sheep that before her shearers is dumb. And as for His fate, who thought thereon. Through an oppressive doom was He taken away, that He had been cut out of the land of the living, that for My people's rebellion He had been stricken to death. And His grave was appointed with the rebellious, and with the wicked His tomb, although He had done no injustice, nor was there deceit in His mouth."

"Cut out of the land of the living," He lived and died. In Akka, the place of "the rebellious," He made His residence and "with the wicked His tomb." In this ruined place, forsaken, hated and persecuted, the Lord of Hosts established His Kingdom, which shall be made an eternal excellency and joy unto all generations. This is the City of the Lord, the New Jerusalem, the New Mount Zion, where He abode with men and from whence He departed. To it, pilgrimages are now made from all quarters of the earth, literally ful-

filling the prophecy of Isaiah 60: 14, 15:—"They shall call thee The City of the Lord, The Zion of the Holy one of Israel. Whereas thou hast been forsaken and hated, so that no man went through thee, I will make thee an eternal excellency, a joy of many generations."

This is the New Jerusalem, which, according to Christ and the prophets, would not be founded upon the site of the old city of Jerusalem. In his interview with the woman of Samaria, Christ said (John 4: 21):—"Woman, believe me, the hour cometh when ye shall neither in this mountain nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father." By this prophecy, Christ indicated that God the Father would be worshiped in another place, at the time of His coming.

Furthermore, according to Ezekiel, the New Jerusalem should be near the sea, and a river will pass through the Holy Place, the waters of which will die in the sea. This clearly shows that the old site of Jerusalem could not have been intended, since it is far from the sea and noted for scarcity of water. In reality, the New Jerusalem, the Holy Place of Beha 'U'llah's residence outside the walls of Akka, is situated one and a quarter miles distant from the sea. The palace of Behja and the gardens Rizwan where He lived after His confinement, correspond exactly with the prophecy of Ezekiel, 47th chapter—"Afterward, he brought me again unto the door of the house; and behold, waters issued out from under the threshold of the house eastward; and behold, there ran out waters

on the right side. And when the man that had the line in his hand, went forth eastward, he measured a thousand cubits and he brought me through the waters ; the waters were to the ankles.

..... Afterward he measured a thousand ; and it was a river that I could not pass over ; for the waters were risen, waters to swim in, a river that could not be passed over ; Now when I had returned, behold, at the bank of the river were very many trees on the one side and on the other. Then said he unto me, These waters issue out toward the east country and go down into the desert, and go into the sea, which being brought forth into the sea, the waters shall be healed."

Through the Rizwan, rush living streams of water, hurrying down into the sea, while surrounding the river, are beautiful gardens, with trees "upon both banks of the river," just as the prophet described. When the Manifestation of God came to live there, the desert literally blossomed as the rose, fulfilling the prophecy of Isaiah 35 : 1 :—"The wilderness, and the solitary place, shall be glad for them ; and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose."

The city Akka was mentioned by Micah, 1 : 9, 10 :—"For her wound is incurable, for it is come unto Judah ; he is come unto the gate of my people, even to Jerusalem. Declare ye it not at Gath, weep ye not at Akka." The translators of our version of scripture, substituted for "Akka," as rendered in the original Hebrew and Arabic translation, the expression "at all," for they believed

that the prophet was speaking of Jerusalem, and, as Akka was not Jerusalem, they made the correction to correspond with their own ideas.

Isaiah accurately located the Holy City, New Jerusalem, at Akka; 9th chapter, 1st verse:— (Literal Translation of Prophecies of Isaiah, by Prof. Cheyne). “Surely there is (now) no (more) gloom to her whose lot was affliction. At the former time he brought shame on the land of Zebulun and on the land of Naphtali, but in the latter, he hath brought honor on the way by the sea, the other side of Jordan, the district of the nations. The people that walk in darkness see a great light; they that dwell in the land of deadly shade, light shineth brilliantly upon them. Thou hast multiplied exultation, thou hast increased joy; they rejoice before thee as with joy in the harvest, as men exult when they divide spoil. For the yoke of his burden, and the staff of his back, the rod of his taskmaster, thou hast broken, as in the days of Midian. Yea, every boot of him that stamped with noise, and the cloak rolled in blood—they are to be burned up as fuel of fire. For a child is born unto us, a son is given unto us, and the government resteth upon his back, and his name is called, Wonder-Counsellor, God-Mighty-One, Everlasting-Father, Prince of Peace; increased is the government and to peace there is no end; upon the throne of David and throughout His kingdom, in establishing and supporting it by justice and by righteousness from henceforth and forever. The jealousy of Jehovah Sabbaoth will perform this.”

If we examine the point of location between the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, we find that Akka is situated in the very spot described by the prophet. To further appoint the exact situation, he said "but in the latter time he hath brought honor on the Way by the sea." From ancient times, the highway to Damascus from the sea, commenced at Akka. In "Prophecies of Isaiah," page 59 (note) "Via Maris, M. Renan observes, was the name of the high-road from Akka to Damascus, as late as the Crusades. 'Way,' however, means 'region.' Thus literally, the Manifestation of Jehovah, Beha 'U'llah, appeared in the latter days and brought "Honor upon the 'Way by the Sea.'" Beha Himself repeated this in His tablet to Queen Victoria:—"There is no God but Me, the Precious, the Wise. Lay aside what is on the earth; then adorn the head of dominion with the diadem of thy glorious Lord; verily He hath come into the world with His most great Glory, and that which was mentioned in the Gospel, was fulfilled. The land of Syria hath been honored by the advance of its Lord the King of man, and the exhilaration of the Wine of Union hath seized upon the regions of the South and North; blessed is he who discovereth the scent of the Merciful (i. e. God) and advanceth to the dawning-place of Beauty in this clear morning." This great Light which dispersed the darkness, gloom and ignorance of humanity, is Jehovah Himself, the Manifestation of God, Beha 'U'llah, who enlightened the world by His coming. This is the

understanding of Prof. Cheyne, p. 59 :—" But the phrase (multiplied exultation before Thee) has received a deeper meaning. It is the presence of Jehovah on which their joy depends." Jehovah is therefore, in reality, the Child, the Son to be given, whose name should be Wonder-Counsellor, God-Mighty-One, Everlasting-Father, Prince of Peace. He is the One, Beha 'U'llah, who, in His commands to the kings and rulers of the world, advised and foreshadowed the coming of the "Most Great Peace."

Akka became the "Galilee of Nations," after His appearance. There, literally, during His lifetime and since His departure, the nations have "gathered." Christ said of His coming, that the "eagles will be gathered about Him." From all parts of the earth, pilgrims journey to Akka, the Holy City, in their love and zeal to worship God, while, in a more worldly sense, since the appearance of the Manifestation here, the great nations have begun to centre their political plans and territorial ambitions which will culminate in the domination of Asia by European governments.



THE RIZWAN
The Garden of Behá 'U'llah

**The three jardiniers near Dr. Kheiralla mark the place where the favorite
seat of the Manifestation was placed.**

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE MANIFESTATION.—(Continued.)

Beha 'U'llah lived in the Palace Behjá, a short distance outside the city walls, and none could see His face, without sending a supplication for permission to come into His presence. Isaiah had written 8:17:—"And I will wait upon the Lord, that hideth His face from the house of Jacob, and I will look for Him." Zechariah had uttered a similar prophecy 8:20 to 23:—"Thus saith the Lord of hosts; It shall yet come to pass, that there shall come people, and the inhabitants of many cities: And the inhabitants of one city shall go to another, saying, Let us go speedily to pray before the Lord [the Face of the Lord] and to seek the Lord of hosts: I will go also. Yea, many people and strong nations shall come to seek the Lord of hosts in Jerusalem, and to pray before the Lord. Thus saith the Lord of hosts: In those days it shall come to pass, that ten men shall take hold out of all languages of the nations, even shall take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew saying, We will go with you: for we have heard that God is with you."

Thousands of believers from all countries and languages of Europe and Asia, came to Akka during His lifetime, begging the guides, their teachers, to obtain for them the necessary permission to see His Glorious Face.

During His abode in the Holy City, He gave forth from the Ocean of His Wisdom, thousands of tablets, containing everything that is necessary for the material and spiritual welfare of mankind. He ordained just and perfect laws of government, which reflect the Wisdom of Divinity and which are destined to accomplish universal peace and concord, when incorporated, as God intends they shall be, into the rules and government of nations. The translation of these laws and precepts into English, will shortly be completed. A few passages from translations by Prof. Browne, may be quoted.

“Verily the first thing which God hath ordained unto (His) servants is the knowledge of the Dawning-place of His revelation and the Rising-place of His command, who was the station of Himself in the world of command and creation. Whosoever attaineth thereunto hath attained unto all good, and he who is deprived (thereof) is indeed of the people of error, even though he bringeth all (good) actions. And when ye have attained to this most glorious station, and this most lofty horizon, it behooveth every one to follow that whereunto he is commanded on the part of the (Supreme) Object, because these two (things) are together; one of them will not be accepted without the other. This is what the Rising-place of Inspiration hath decreed. Verily those who are given vision from God, will regard ordinances of God as the greatest means to the order of the world and the preservation of nations, and he who is careless, is of the vile and worthless.”

He commanded that every believer must pray three times a day, and abolished congregational prayers, with the exception of the prayer for the burial of the dead. He left also, commandments concerning fasting and festivals ; our conduct toward relatives ; our duties toward the poor. He prohibited murder, adultery, slander, back-biting, stealing, wars, and laid the laws of inheritance ; He commanded us to build places for worship and indicated certain ceremonies for burial. He prohibited mendicancy, saying " the most hateful of mankind before God, is he who sits and begs ; take hold of the robe of means, relying upon God, the Causer of causes." He abolished the confessional, and prohibited us from asking pardon from each other, saying we should ask it from God only, for those who have done wrong, must repent and return to God. He censured all those who claim to have inward knowledge and understanding of the Divine Mysteries, like the Sufis, and other philosophers. He censured austerities and self-mortifications and exposed their uselessness. He said that every one who claims to have a new revelation, assuming the mission of a prophet during the following thousand years, is a liar. He is the fulfillment of all prophecies, and the function of all prophecy was to prepare for and announce His coming. As He has already come, there will be no more prophets until the great time of peace, the millennium, is finished, at which time, God will send new revelations and new prophets. Zechariah prophesied this same truth as will be shown in the chapter upon His departure.

He ordered the establishment of "Beytu'l 'Adl," the House of Justice, in which all authority and administration should be vested. The power of the House of Justice is absolute. The estate of those who die without heirs shall come under its control to be expended for the poor, the fatherless, widows and useful public works. He gave instructions concerning private life, personal conduct, amusements, marriage and divorce. He admonished parents to educate their children, and ordered that if they were not able to do so, the House of Justice must educate them.

If we study the laws He gave us, concerning the punishment and treatment of criminals, we will discover that they differ very materially from existing laws, in the fact that they are not intended to punish the culprit, but to prevent the cause which induced the crime. For instance, the intention of the law concerning thieves, is as follows: If a man should steal a sum of money or other property, he would be arraigned before the House of Justice, where the honorable members of the House, after examining the facts of the case, will rebuke him severely, showing him the error of his deed, and that he is losing the honor which God has bestowed upon him. If the culprit has a trade or profession, he will be supplied with outfit or capital sufficient to enable him to earn his living, by honorable labor. Should he, through circumstances, lose that endowment of capital, the House of Justice will supply him with a second endowment. If he is found guilty of stealing a second time, he will be again

summoned before the House of Justice, given a last warning, and assisted according to best judgment and his needs. For a third offense, the word "thief" is branded in indelible letters upon his forehead, and he is set free.

The laws left by Beha 'U'llah cover all points and questions of national administration. He commanded kings and rulers how to treat with each other and how to deal with their subjects. The universal adoption of these laws, will abolish wars, and dispense with armies and navies. These commandments were sent twice by Him, to the rulers of every nation. The tablet to Queen Victoria contains the following extract.

"O Assembly of Kings ! Verily we see you increasing your expenditure every year, and placing the burden thereof on your subjects ; this is naught but manifest injustice. Fear the sighs of the Oppressed and his tears, and do not burden your subjects above that which they can bear, neither ruin them to build up your palaces : Choose for them that which ye choose for yourselves : thus do we expound unto you that which will profit you, if ye are of those who enquire."

He showed the kings and the rulers of the earth, in these tablets, that their subjects are their treasures, and warned them not to impose upon them that which God hath not commanded. He said to the kings, "you are ruling, living and conquering by virtue of your subjects, and yet you consider yourselves greater than they are; this is naught but an astonishment." He commanded them to be in

accord and peace with each other and when they so agree, according to His laws, if any one of the governments should disturb the peace, He gives the right to all the other governments to rise against that one and punish it.

Besides the commandments to kings and rulers of the earth, He especially invited them and many others of authority, to come to His Kingdom, believe in Him, and receive from Him spiritual blessings and gifts; urging them to come to His heavenly banquet and partake of the life-giving food and water with the "elect."

Enoch also prophesied of this; Book of Enoch, 62d chapter: "And the just and the chosen will be saved on that day, and will henceforth not see the face of the sinners and of the unjust. And the Lord of the spirits will dwell over them and they will dwell with this Son of man, and will eat and lie down and rise again with Him to all eternity."

In the same chapter, Enoch said—"And thus the Lord commanded the kings and the powerful and the exalted and those who dwell on the earth, and said: Open your eyes and lift up your horns, if you are able to recognize the Chosen One. And the Lord of the spirits sat on the throne of His Glory, and the spirit of justice was poured out over Him, and the words of His mouth slew all the sinners, and all the impious, and they were destroyed before His Face. For before Him we have not believed, and have not honored the Name of the Lord of the kings, and we have not praised the Lord in all His doing, and our hope was in the sceptre of our king-

dom and in our glory. And thus said the Lord of the spirits : This is the ordinance and judgment of the mighty and the kings and the exalted, and those who hold the earth before the Lord of the spirits."

As Christ had prophesied (Luke 14th), these commands and invitations from the Lord of the Banquet, were rejected and refused. Only two rulers deigned even the courtesy of a reply—Queen Victoria of England, and Czar Alexander II of Russia. Napoleon III threw away the tablet he received, saying, "If this man be God, I am two Gods."

For this act of blasphemy and impiety, Napoleon III received from Beha 'U'llah, a second tablet, containing an utterance of judgment. The following passages are quoted from a translation by Prof. Browne :

".... Verily, O King, we heard from thee a word which thou didst speak when the King of Russia asked of thee concerning what was settled as to the order of the war : Verily thy Lord is Wise and Informed. 'Thou didst say, 'I was asleep in my bed (when) the cry of the servants (of God) who were wronged, even till they were drowned in the Black Sea, awoke me.' Thus did we hear and God is the witness of what I say : Thou canst witness that it was not their cry, but (thine own) lust (of war) which awoke thee, inasmuch as we tried thee and found thee afar off. Hadst thou been the speaker [lit. owner] of that speech, thou wouldst not have cast the book of God behind thy back when it was

sent to thee on the part of One Mighty and Wise. Verily we tried thee therewith, and did not find thee in that state whereto thou didst pretend. Arise and make reparation for what has passed away from thee. The world shall perish and what thou hast, and the Kingdom remains to thy God, thy Lord, and the Lord of thy fathers who were of yore. Because of what thou hast done, affairs shall be changed in thy kingdom, and empire shall depart from thine hands, as a punishment for thine action; then shalt thou find thyself in manifest loss, and commotion shall seize the peoples there, unless thou arisest to assist in this matter, and followest the Spirit in this Straight Way. Thy glory hath made thee proud; By my life! Verily it shall not endure, but shall pass away, unless thou takest hold of this firm rope. We have seen humiliation hastening after thee, while thou art of those that sleep."

A few months after this tablet had been received by Napoleon III, war was declared between France and Germany, in which the Emperor of France was dethroned, humiliated, and died an exile in England.

The action of the Turkish Government, in banishing Him from Adrianople, was judged by Beha in a tablet sent to the Ra'is.—". . . . And the land of Mystery (Adrianople) and what is beside it, shall be changed and shall pass out of the hand of the King (the sultan of Turkey) and commotion shall appear, and lamentation shall arise, and trouble shall become manifest on all sides, and matters shall be altered

by reason of that which hath come on these hearts from the hosts of the oppressors."

After this tablet of condemnation had been sent, the Christian powers of Europe took up the question of the Bulgarian massacres, and Russia, in conflict with Turkey, liberated Bulgaria from the rule of the Sultan.

Beha also judged Sultan Abdu'l-'Aziz and Ali Pasha, the prime minister of Turkey, foretelling the assassination of the ministers who killed Abdu'l-'Aziz. The record of this fulfillment, in detail, may be found in "The Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society" July, 1899, page 492.

"Besides these, the downfall of the Sultan Abdu'l-'Aziz, the death of Ali Pasha away from his native country, and the assassination of the Turkish ministers who were killed by Cherkez Hasan, are all said to have been foreshadowed by Beha, and many of those Babis who have been much at Akka, relate instances of verbal warnings of impending events and dangers in their own cases."

The judgment of Turkey was uttered by Beha, page 977: "Turkey personified in Constantinople, is also addressed thus: 'O Point which liest on the shore of the two seas! The throne of injustice hath been fixed in thee, and in thee hath been kindled the fire of hatred, in such wise that the Supreme Host lament thereat, and those who circle around the lofty Throne. We behold in thee, the foolish ruling over the wise, and the darkness exalting itself over the light, and verily thou art

in evident delusion. Thine outward adornment hath rendered thee proud; thou shalt perish, by the Lord of Creation! and thy daughters and widows and those people that are within thee shall lament. Thus doth the Wise, the All-Knowing, admonish thee.' ”

Ezekiel's prophecy concerning Mohammedanism, corresponds exactly with the judgment of Turkey by Beha 'U'llah. Turkey, although not an Arabic kingdom, is the center of Mohammedanism and the head government of the Arabs, for it originated from the Arabic kingdom. The prophet, in the third and fourth verses of the 16th chapter, showed plainly that it is the Mohammedan government, by saying that “Thy father was an Amorite (an Arab tribe) and thy mother a Hittite (another Arab tribe), and as for thy nativity, in the day thou wast born (the commencement of the appearance of the Arabic kingdom in the time of Mohammed), thy navel was not cut, neither wast thou washed in water to supple thee; thou wast not salted at all, nor swaddled at all.” This is a description of the Arab tribes, from whence the Arabic kingdom sprang. Nearly all the chapter speaks of this judgment, but three verses (38, 39 and 40) particularly specify it. “And I will judge thee as women that break wedlock and shed blood are judged; and I will give thee blood in fury and jealousy. And I will also give thee into their hands, and they shall throw down thine eminent place, and shall break down thine high places; they shall strip thee also of thy clothes, and shall take thy fair jewels, and leave thee naked and

bare. They shall also bring up a company against thee, and they shall stone thee with stones, and thrust thee through with their swords."

The downfall of Zill-i-Sultan was foreshadowed in an epistle from Beha to Sheykh Bakir. He also foretold the martyrdom of Sultanu'sh-Shuhada (the King of Martyrs) and Mahbubu'sh-Shuhada (the Beloved of Martyrs) in Isfahan. Beha foretold the exile of some of His own followers, which happened when Isma'il Pasha of Egypt, with the council general of Persia, exiled them to the Khartoum. While there, they received an epistle from Beha 'U'llah, promising them that they should return to their homes and see Him at Akka, and that Isma'il Pasha himself should shortly be exiled from the land of Egypt. From "A Year amongst the Persians," by Prof. Browne: "How long were you imprisoned at Khartoum?" I (Browne) enquired: "and how did you effect your escape?" "We remained there for seven years" replied Haji Mirza Hasan, "and for some time we were unable to communicate with our Master, or even ascertain whither He had been removed (for vague rumors of His removal from Adrianople reached us). At length we foregathered with some Christian missionaries, whose good will we won by manifesting an interest in their doctrines. By means of these, we were enabled to send a letter to Beha, informing Him of our condition. On receiving our letter, Beha at once indited an answer, consoling us in our misfortune and announcing that our oppressor, Isma'il

Pasha, would shortly fall from power, and that we should in a little while stand again in the presence of our Master. This letter was intrusted to an Arab called Jasim, who started at once for Khartoum, where he arrived six months later. When we received it, there seemed to be no likelihood that the promises of deliverance which it contained, would be fulfilled; but we were at least no longer wholly cut off from our friends, for the Arab not only took back our answer with him, but made arrangements with believers at Suez, to forward our letters in the future. Soon after this your English general came to Khartoum, I forget his name, but you will probably remember it." "General Gordon," I answered. "Yes," rejoined Haji Mirza Hasan, "that was it." Well, soon after his arrival, he enquired about the prisoners whom he found in Khartoum, and especially about us and the other Persians. As he could find no crime recorded against us, he interrogated us as to the reason of our confinement. We told him that we were innocent of any crime and that we had been condemned unheard, without a chance of defending ourselves. Our statement was confirmed by the prison officials, and General Gordon accordingly telegraphed to Isma'il Pasha demanding the reason of our detention. The replies which he received were vague and unsatisfactory, and he accordingly released us, telling us that we were free to stay or go as we pleased. Haji Mirza Hasan, Ali and myself at once availed ourselves of this permission,

and set out for Acre, but our companions, having wives and families in Khartoum, chose to remain there. Soon after this, as you know, Isma'il Pasha was deposed, and the prophecy contained in the epistle was fulfilled."

The Pope of Rome having ignored and refused the commands of Beha 'U'llah, another tablet was sent to him, stating that he should be humiliated, and Rome taken from him, a judgment literally fulfilled a few years afterwards, when the Imperial City, which had been under papal dominion for over one thousand years, became subject to the rule of the Kingdom of Italy.

Frederick III, then Crown Prince of Germany, during a pilgrimage to Syria, passed by Akka, ignoring an invitation to visit and acknowledge the Manifestation of God. For this, he was judged by the statement that he should never rule his country. He was crowned on his sick bed, and died three months later, literally without having ruled Germany a single day.

A prophecy concerning future events in Germany, was uttered by Beha 'U'llah as follows:

"O banks of the river Rhine! We have seen you drenched in gore, because the swords of retribution were drawn against you, and you shall have another turn. And we hear the lamentation of Berlin, though it be today in manifest glory."

One of His prophecies foretold the future of Persia, blessing the city of Teheran, His birth-place. He said:

"If He (God) will, He will bless thy throne with one who shall rule with justice and gather together the sheep of God which have been scattered by the wolves. Affairs shall be changed in thee, and a republic of men shall rule over thee. Verily thy Lord is the Wise, the Encompasser."



THE RIZWAN

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE MANIFESTATION.—(Continued.)

Akka is the New Jerusalem, Zion, where Beha 'U'llah lived from 1868 to 1892 the year of His departure. He made His residence sometimes inside the city walls, sometimes outside in the Palace Behjá. He also lived in the village of Haifa, nine miles from Akka, at the foot of Mount Carmel.

If we study the prophecies of our scripture concerning Zion, we will find that they were all fulfilled in Him.

In Revelations 21:5: "And He that sat upon the throne, said, Behold I will make all things new. And He said unto me, Write; for these words are true and faithful." This prophecy was fulfilled by Beha, who gave to the world new laws, new comprehension of spiritual truth and instituted observances which are destined to become universal. He appointed the year to consist of nineteen months of nineteen days each; the extra days necessary to complete the solar year, to be a festival period. The new year begins March 21st. He proposed a universal language, fulfilling the prophecy of Zephaniah 3:9. "For then I will turn to the people, a pure language, that they may all call upon the name of the Lord, to serve Him with one consent."

Prof. Browne refers to this language, in the Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society, October, 1899,

page 921 : "The book closes with a recommendation that mankind shall select one language and one character of those which exist and adopt them as a means of communication, one with another. 'This,' says Beha, 'is the means of union, if ye knew it, and the greatest cause of concord and civilization did ye recognize it.' "

In the month of May, 1892, (1309 A. H.), the forty years of His wanderings in the wilderness of exile, were accomplished and the forty prophetic days, during which the deluge of the waters of Life from the heavenly ocean of His utterance should pour upon the earth, were fulfilled. In these waters of teaching, all who reject Him will be drowned spiritually. When the Sun of Truth departed from this earthly sphere, to shine with a brightness eternal in the regions of Might and Glory, the end of the world, spiritually, had come. The year 1892 marks the completion of six cycles from Adam and the beginning of the seventh, the new dispensation.

In "Our Race," Prof. Totten says "In the Mosaic account in the Ollam books, it is said that Messiah will appear 565 years after the year 3431, which makes 3996, and this year 3996 corresponds with 1892 A. D." The still more remarkable fact is, that the number 565 is the numerical equivalent of the word "Hoah," that is to say "Jehovah," who departed from this earthly sphere in 1892.

At the time of His departure, a tablet was sent to Prof. Browne of Cambridge University, England, by Badi 'U'llah, the youngest son of Beha, from which tablet, the following is quoted :

“O friend of my heart, and delight of my soul! In these days, the showers of affliction do so descend from the clouds of the firmament of fate, and the thunderbolts of griefs and sorrows do so succeed one another, that neither hath the tongue strength to describe, nor the pen power to utter them. For the horizon of the Phenomenal World is bereft of the effulgence of the Sun of Wisdom and Revelation, and the throne of the Universe is deprived of the radiance of the Most Mighty Luminary. The ears of the friends are, to outward appearance, debarred from hearkening to the cry of the Supreme Pen, and the eyes of the longing are veiled from the contemplation of the Most Glorious Horizon. Great God! how dire a catastrophe is this which has arisen in the World, and how grievous a calamity is this which hath appeared in the Universe! The Sun of Truth hath bidden farewell to this earthly sphere, and now shines with a brightness which waneth not, in the regions of Might and Glory. Albeit this supreme affliction transcends endurance, and this most dire disaster lays in ruins the edifice of resignation and patience, yet, having regard to the authoritative command and binding behest revealed from the Holy Angel-World in the Kitab-i-Akdas, we and you alike must adorn ourselves with the ornament of patience and resignation, lay hold of the firm rope of submission and acquiescence, apply ourselves with strong hearts and tranquil souls to what will conduce to the progress of mankind, the peace and prosperity of the world, the amelioration of character, and

the appearance of charity and concord, and attach ourselves with our whole being to the counsels of the Lord of the Visible and the Invisible, so that the Phenomenal World may, by the Grace of that Beneficent Being, be beheld an envy to the Garden of Paradise. Nor is this thing difficult with God. The blessed text revealed in the Kitab-i-Akdas shall here be cited. He says (great is His Glory and universal His Bounty), 'O people of the earth! When the Sun of my Beauty sets, and the firmament of my Form is hidden, be not troubled: arise for the helping of my work and the advancement of my Word throughout the worlds. Verily we are with you under all conditions, and will help you with the truth; verily we can do this. Whosoever knoweth me, will rise up to serve me with such uprising that the hosts of heaven and earth shall not put him down.' (And in another place He says) 'Say, O, People! let not trouble take possession of you when the Kingdom of my Epiphany becomes concealed, and the Waves of the Ocean of My Utterance are hushed. Verily there is in my Epiphany a reason, and in my Occultation another reason, which none knoweth save God, the Incomparable, the All-Knowing. And we shall see from the Most Glorious Horizon, and will help whomsoever riseth up for the helping of our work, with hosts from the Supreme Concourse, and a cohort of the Cherubim.'"

The Sun of Wisdom and Revelation having set, the Anointed One, the Everlasting Father and King of Kings having departed, we are now able

to understand David's prophetic Psalm, the 72d, which has puzzled biblical scholars and students of prophecy, for centuries. "Give the king thy judgments, O God, and thy righteousness to the King's son. He shall judge thy people with righteousness and thy poor with judgment. The mountains shall bring peace to the people, He shall save the children of the needy, and shall break in pieces the oppressors. They shall fear thee while the sun endureth, and so long as the moon throughout all generations. He shall come down like rain upon the mown grass ; As showers that water the earth : In his day shall the righteous flourish ; And abundance of peace, till the moon be no more. He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth. They that dwell in the wilderness shall bow before him ; and his enemies shall lick the dust. The kings of Tarshish and of the isles shall bring him presents ; The kings of Sheba and Seba shall offer gifts. Yea, all kings shall fall down before him : All nations shall serve him. For he shall deliver the needy when he crieth ; and the poor that hath no helper. He shall have pity on the poor and the needy, and the souls of the needy shall he save. He shall redeem their soul from oppression and violence ; and precious shall their blood be in his sight. And they shall live ; and to him shall be given of the gold of Sheba ; And men shall pray for him continually ; They shall bless him all the day long. There shall be abundance of corn upon the earth upon the top of the mountains. The

fruit thereof shall shake like Lebanon ; And they of the city shall flourish like the grass of the earth. His name shall endure forever ; His name shall be continued as long as the sun ; And men shall be blessed in him ; All nations shall call him happy. Blessed be the Lord God, the God of Israel, who only doeth wondrous things : And blessed be His glorious name forever ; and let the whole earth be filled with His glory: Amen, and Amen."

The Personality of Beha 'U'llah was, alone, a sufficient proof and witness of His Divinity. If we disregard all scriptural proof and prophetic utterance concerning His appearance, we have overwhelming proof from His Personality and Wisdom, that He was the Manifestation of the Infinite God. His utterances reveal the highest possibility of human knowledge and epitomize all the truth previously received through messengers and prophets of God. He has proved and completed the promise and teachings of Jesus Christ, who said (John 16:25): "These things have I spoken unto you in proverbs, but the time cometh when I shall no more speak unto you in proverbs, but I shall show you plainly of the Father." We must remember that Christ himself was not speaking, but the Father who abode in Christ.

Beha 'U'llah announced this in a tablet to the Pope:— "All revelation from heaven given in parables, was revealed to the people by the tongue of the Son (Jesus Christ), but the One who speaks in this day, He does not speak in parables but in facts. Beware not to cling to the garment of super-

stitutions and thus deprive yourself of what was ordained in the Kingdom of God, the Mighty, the Giver."

Christ's mission was to preach to the world, the coming of the Kingdom of Beha 'U'llah. As a forerunner of this, the greatest event in earth's history, Christ laid the spiritual foundation by which the hearts of men were fitted and made ready to comprehend the teachings of Beha. It is evident that the revelation of God's truth has always been limited by human capacity to take and understand it. Christ said to his disciples (John 16:12): "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now." In promising to come again upon the earth, in his Father's Kingdom, to renew the cup of teaching, he indicated prophetically, that the earth would be fitted at that time to receive and understand the higher truth, which his followers, nineteen hundred years ago, could not "bear." By this, Christ distinctly foretold that Beha 'U'llah, the Father, should complete the spiritual enlightenment of the human race. As Christ also said, his gospel of the Kingdom should be spread to all nations of the earth,—after which the "end" (the Kingdom itself), should come.

In corroboration of this, we find, that although Christ's teachings reflect the highest moralities and spiritual ethics, upon which all true spiritual development must be founded, yet they lack the authority of finality in law and judgment. The function of law-giver, "Wonder-Counsellor,"

judge, was accomplished in Beha 'U'llah, whose truth is the apotheosis of all truth previously uttered by Christ and other God-messengers. As the final revelation and ultimate basis of salvation, Beha's teachings must clarify and interpret all previous utterances of truth, through the light of reason. God never intended that humanity should be judged by the incomprehensible. In addition to this clear light, which we, as responsible creatures standing for judgment, have the right to expect and demand, it is necessary that Beha must give the race, born of the spirit of Christ, the higher vivification of the Father, in order that we may attain the fullness of adoption into Him as His children. By Beha, therefore, we receive the grafting into the Tree of Life. Christ came to leaven and prepare the souls of men for this vivification; Beha the Father accomplished it. He said in a tablet sent to the Ra'is,—“The Child is come to vivify the world and unite all those who are in the whole earth; and the will of God will conquer, and you shall see all the earth the Paradise of EL-ABHA.” This corresponds with what Christ said, “at that time lift up your heads and expect your salvation.” Also by Paul, in First Corinthians, 13:10, “For we know in part and we prophecy in part; but when that which is Perfect is come (Beha 'U'llah, the Everlasting Father), that which is in part shall be done away.” Also in Romans, 8:22 and 23; “For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth together until now. And not only they, but ourselves also, which have

the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the Adoption, to-wit, the Redemption of our Body."

During the lifetime of Beha 'U'llah, His Majestic Personality and the Divinity of His Face, affected high and low, learned and ignorant, all who came before Him, with such power, that instinctively, they bowed before Him in awe and reverence. Enoch, 3:84: "And from that time those who hold the earth will not be powerful and exalted, nor will they be able to behold the Face of the Just, for the Light of the Lord of the spirits is seen on the Face of the Holy and Just and Chosen."

A reliable and convincing statement of the Divinity of Beha 'U'llah, from the pen of an able and unbiased historian, Prof. Browne of Cambridge University, England, is here quoted,— "The Episode of the Bab" page 35;— "I arose the next morning (Tuesday, April 14th) after a most refreshing sleep, and was served with tea by the old man with the spectacles. Soon after this, a sudden stir without, announced the arrival of fresh visitors, and a moment after, my companion of the previous evening entered the room accompanied by two other persons, one of whom proved to be the Babi agent from Beyrout, while the other, as I guessed from the first by the extraordinary deference shown to him by all present, was none other than Beha's eldest son Abbas Effendi. Seldom have I seen one whose appearance impressed me more. A tall, strongly built man, holding himself as straight as an arrow, with

a white turban and raiment, long black locks reaching almost to the shoulder, broad powerful forehead indicating a strong intellect combined with unswerving will, eyes keen as a hawk's, and strongly marked but pleasing features—such was my first impression of Abbas Effendi, the Master (Aka) as he par excellence is called by the Babis. Subsequent conversation with him served only to heighten the respect with which his appearance had at first inspired me. One more eloquent of speech, more ready of argument, more apt of illustration, more intimately acquainted with the sacred books of the Jews, Mohammedans, and Christians, could, I should think, scarcely be found even amongst the eloquent, ready and subtle race to which he belongs. These qualities, combined with a bearing at once majestic and genial, made me cease to wonder at the influence and esteem which he enjoyed even beyond the circle of his father's followers. About the greatness of this man and his power, no one who had seen him could entertain a doubt."

"In this illustrious company did I partake of the mid-day meal. Soon after its conclusion, Abbas Effendi and the others arose with a prefatory 'Bismi'llah,' and signified to me that I should accompany them, which I did, without having any idea whither I was going. I observed, however, that the saddle-bags containing my effects were carried after us by one of those present; from which I concluded that I was not to remain in my present quarters. We left the house, traversed the bazaars,

and quitted the town by its solitary gate. Outside this gate near the sea is a large shed which serves as a coffee-house, and here we seated ourselves, my companions evidently awaiting the arrival of something or somebody from a large mansion, half hidden in a grove of trees situated about a mile and a half inland, towards which they continually directed their glances. While we waiting thus, a weird looking old man, who proved to be none other than the famous Mushkin-Kalam, came, and seated himself beside us. He told me that he had heard all about me from a relation of his at Isfahan (that same dallâl who had been the means of my first introduction to the Babi community) and that he had been expecting to see me at Acre ever since that time.

"Presently we discerned advancing towards us along the road from the mansion above mentioned three animals, one of which was ridden by a man. Thereupon we rose and went to meet him, and I soon found myself mounted on one of those fine white asses which, in my opinion, are of all quadrupeds the most comfortable to ride. A quarter of an hour later, we alighted in front of the large mansion aforesaid, whereof the name Behjé (Joy) is said to be a corruption (though as the Babis do not fail to point out, a very happy corruption) of Baghcha (which signified a garden). I was almost immediately conducted into a large room on the ground floor, where I was most cordially received by several persons whom I had not hitherto seen. Amongst these were two of Beha's younger sons,

of whom one was apparently about twenty-five and the other about twenty-one years of age. Both were handsome and distinguished enough in appearance, and the expression of the younger was singularly sweet and winning. Besides these, a very old man with light blue eyes and white beard, whose green turban proclaimed him a descendant of the Prophet, advanced to welcome me, saying: 'We know not how we should greet thee, whether we should salute thee with "As-selamu" "Aleykum" or with "Allahu Abha."' When I discovered that this venerable old man was not only one of the original companions of the Bab, but his relative and comrade from earliest childhood, it may well be imagined with what eagerness I gazed upon him and listened to his every utterance.

"So here at Behjé was I installed as a guest, in the very midst of all that Babism accounts most noble and most holy; and here did I spend five most memorable days, during which I enjoyed unparalleled and unhopèd-for opportunities of holding intercourse with those who are the very fountain-heads of that mighty and wondrous spirit which works with invisible but ever-increasing force for the transformation and quickening of a people who slumber in a sleep like unto death. It was in truth a strange and moving experience, but one whereof I despair of conveying any save the feeblest impression. I might, indeed, strive to describe in greater detail the faces and forms which surrounded me, the conversation to which I was privileged to listen, the solemn melodious reading

of the sacred books, the general sense of harmony and content which pervaded the place, and the fragrant shady gardens whither in the afternoons we sometimes repaired ; but all this was as naught in comparison with the spiritual atmosphere with which I was encompassed. Persian Muslims will tell you often that the Babis bewitch or drug their guests, so that these, impelled by a fascination they cannot resist, become singularly affected with what the aforesaid Muslims regard as a strange and incomprehensible madness. Idle and absurd as this belief is, it yet rests on a basis of fact stronger than that which supports the greater part of what they allege concerning this people. The spirit which pervades the Babis is such that it can hardly fail to affect most powerfully all subjected to its influence. It may appall or attract ; it cannot be ignored or disregarded. Let those who have not seen disbelieve me if they will ; but, should that spirit once reveal itself to them, they will experience an emotion which they are not likely to forget.

“Of the culminating events of this my journey some few words at least must be said. During the morning of the day after my installation at Behjé one of Beha’s younger sons entered the room where I was sitting and beckoned me to follow him. I did so, and was conducted through passages and rooms at which I scarcely had time to glance, to a spacious hall, paved, so far as I remember (for my mind was occupied with other thoughts) with a mosaic of marble. Before a curtain suspended from the wall of this great ante-chamber, my con-

ductor paused for a moment while I removed my shoes. Then, with a quick movement of the hand, he withdrew, and, as I passed, replaced the curtain; and I found myself in a large apartment, along the upper end of which ran a low divan, while on the side opposite to the door were placed two or three chairs. Though I dimly suspected whither I was going and whom I was to behold (for no distinct intimation had been given to me) a second or two elapsed ere, with a throb of wonder and awe, I became definitely conscious that the room was not untenanted. In the corner where the divan met the wall sat a wondrous and venerable figure, crowned with a felt head-dress of the kind called Taj by dervishes (but of unusual height and make), round the base of which was wound a small white turban. The face of him on whom I gazed I can never forget, though I cannot describe it. Those piercing eyes seemed to read one's very soul; power and authority sat on that ample brow; while the deep lines on the forehead and face implied an age which the jet black hair and beard flowing down in indistinguishable luxuriance almost to the waist, seemed to belie.

"No need to ask in whose presence I stood, as I bowed myself before one who is the object of a devotion and love which kings might envy and emperors sigh for in vain!

"A mild dignified voice bade me be seated, and then continued: 'Praise be to God that thou hast attained!.....Thou hast come to see a prisoner and an exile.....We desire but the good of the

world and the happiness of nations ; yet they deem us a stirrer up of strife and sedition worthy of bondage and banishment. That all nations should become one in faith and all men brothers ; that the bonds of affection and unity between the sons of men should be strengthened ; that diversity of religion should cease, and difference of race be annulled—what harm is there in this ? Yet so shall it be ; these fruitless strifes, these ruinous wars shall pass away, and the Most Great Peace shall come. Do not you in Europe need this also ? Is not this that which Christ foretold ? Yet do we see your kings and rulers lavishing their treasures more freely on means for the destruction of the human race than on that which would conduce to the happiness of mankind. These strifes and this bloodshed and discord must cease, and all men be as one kindred and one family. Let not a man glory in this, that he loves his country ; let him rather glory in this, that he loves his kind.'

"Such, so far as I can recall them, were the words which, besides many others, I heard from Beha. Let those who read them consider well with themselves whether such doctrines merit death and bonds, and whether the world is more likely to gain or lose by their diffusion."

(C)



ABBAS EFFENDI
Gusn-i-Azam (The Greatest Branch)
Taken over thirty years ago

CHAPTER XXV.

THE NATIONALITY.

The prophets plainly foretold that the Manifestation of the Everlasting Father should appear in the East: that He should be born from Mohammedan lineage.

The vision of Nebuchadnezzar, recorded and interpreted in the second chapter of Daniel, foretold the five successive historical conditions which prevailed in the Kingdom of Babylon, from the time of Nebuchadnezzar, to the overthrow of Roman power by the religion and government of Mohammed, in the seventh century A. D. As Daniel explained to the King, the Kingdom of Babylon, which embraced Chaldea, Assyria and Persia, was symbolized by an image or statue, of which he (Nebuchadnezzar), was the head of gold. As gold signifies the greatest value and justice, Nebuchadnezzar was the greatest and highest ruler of that Kingdom. After the downfall of Nebuchadnezzar, a second condition, symbolized by the breast and arms of silver, prevailed. This was historically fulfilled in the Kingdom of the Medes and Persians, under Darius and Cyrus, which was established upon the overthrown Babylonian Kingdom. Following this, came the Kingdom of the Greeks under Alexander the Great, represented by the thighs of brass; then the Roman Empire, symbolized by legs

of iron; after which the Mohammedan invasion of Persia and Chaldea, in the seventh century after Christ, absorbed all that remained of the ancient Babylonian Kingdom. This last condition of the image, is represented by the "feet part of iron and part of clay." Then the prophet continues, "Thou sawest till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon its feet that were of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces." "Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, broken to pieces together, and became like the chaff of the summer threshingfloors; and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them: and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth."....."And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed: and the Kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever." "Forasmuch as thou sawest that the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it brake in pieces the iron, the brass, the clay, the silver, and the gold; the great God hath made known to the king what shall come to pass hereafter: and the dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof sure."

By this prophecy, we are taught that the Manifestation of God who should establish the Kingdom upon earth, to stand forever, would appear at the time of the fall of Mohammedan power; that He should come from the Persian nationality, a proph-

ecy literally accomplished in Beha 'U'llah, who was born in Persia, in this, the first century that has witnessed the decadence of Mohammedan power, since Mohammed carried his rule and religion into Persia, twelve hundred years before the Manifestation appeared. This everlasting Kingdom must necessarily be a spiritual kingdom, for, if temporal, it could not "stand forever."

This corresponds with the prophecy of Enoch, chapter 56, 5 to 7 :—"And in those days the angels will assemble, and turn their heads towards the east, towards the people of Parthia and Media, in order to excite the kings, and that a spirit of disturbance came over them, and disturbed them from off their thrones, that they come forth from their resting places like lions and like hungry wolves amidst their flocks. And they will ascend and step upon the land of their chosen, and the land of his chosen will be before them a threshing-floor and a path. But the city of my just will be a hindrance to their horses, and they will take up a battle amongst themselves, and their right will become strong against themselves, and a man will not know his neighbor or his brother, nor the son his father or his mother, until there shall be sufficient bodies by their death and their punishment over them,—it will not be in vain."

This prophecy was completed and fulfilled in minutest detail, for in Parthia and Media which once formed the present country of Persia, the King and rulers were so much disturbed by the Manifestation, Beha 'U'llah, and goaded into ac-

tion by the fury of the Mohammedan doctors, that they ordered and sanctioned a persecution which has no parallel in the annals of history. In reality, the land of the chosen of God, became "a threshing-floor and a path."

"But the city of my just will be a hindrance to their horses." When Beha was exiled from Persia to Baghdad (the Court of Peace), the Persians were not able to persecute Him or His followers, since He was then under the protection of Turkish rule, so, literally, Baghdad was a "hindrance to their horses."

Enoch also said,— "A man will not know his neighbor, nor his brother, nor the son his father or his mother, until there shall be sufficient bodies by their death." In the fanatical frenzy of the Persian persecution, family ties and relationships were annulled and ignored, parents persecuting their children, children assisting in the martyrdom of parents, relatives sacrificing relatives with implacable hatred and fury.

As already explained, the prophecy of Isaiah 24: 23 was fulfilled at the time of His appearance in Persia and Turkey.

"Then the moon shall be confounded, and the sun ashamed, when the Lord of hosts shall reign in Mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, and before his ancients, gloriously." Here Turkey is symbolized by the moon, the emblem of that country, and Persia, by the emblem of the sun.

Ezekiel 16; verses 1-14: "Again the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, Son of man, cause

Jerusalem to know her abominations, and say, Thus saith the Lord God unto Jerusalem; Thy birth and thy nativity, is of the land of Canaan; thy father was an Amorite, and thy mother an Hittite. And as for thy nativity, in the day thou wast born thy navel was not cut, neither wast thou washed in water to supple thee; thou wast not salted at all, nor swaddled at all. None eye pitied thee, to do any of these unto thee, to have compassion upon thee; but thou wast cast out in the open field, to the loathing of thy person, in the day that thou wast born. And when I passed by thee, and saw thee polluted in thine own blood, I said unto thee when thou wast in thy blood, Live; yea, I said unto thee when thou wast in thy blood, Live. I have caused thee to multiply as the bud of the field, and thou hast increased and waxen great, and thou art come to excellent ornaments; thy breasts are fashioned, and thine hair is grown, whereas thou wast naked and bare. Now when I passed by thee, and looked upon thee, behold, thy time was the time of love; and I spread my skirt over thee, and covered thy nakedness; yea, I sware unto thee, and entered into a covenant with thee, saith the Lord God, and thou becamest mine. Then washed I thee with water; yea, I thoroughly washed away thy blood from thee, and I anointed thee with oil. I clothed thee also with brodered work, and shod thee with badger's skin, and I girded thee about with fine linen, and I covered thee with silk. I decked thee also with ornaments, and I put bracelets upon thy hands, and a chain on thy neck. And I put a

jewel on thy forehead, and earrings in thine ears, and a beautiful crown upon thine head. Thus wast thou decked with gold and silver; and thy raiment was of fine linen and silk and brodered work; thou didst eat fine flour, and honey, and oil; and thou wast exceeding beautiful, and thou didst prosper into a kingdom. And thy renown went forth among the heathen for thy beauty; for it was perfect through my comeliness, which I had put upon thee, saith the Lord God."

This utterance of the prophet, accurately describes the Bedouins or Arabs, and has no significance whatever concerning any other nationality. The degradation of these desert tribes, is graphically pictured in the words; "not washed in water to supple them; they were not salted at all, nor swaddled at all; not an eye had pity on them, or had compassion upon them, but they were cast out in the open field,—the desert."

Besides this, the prophet plainly mentioned two of the Arabian tribes, by saying "thy father was an Amorite and thy mother an Hittite." These are the Bedouins of the desert, who, after the appearance of Mohammed, became "exceeding beautiful and prospered into a great kingdom, and were decked with gold and silver, and their raiment was of fine linen and silk and brodered work;" eating "fine flour, honey and oil;" "gaining great renown among all the nations." This was the movement of conquest by which, under the impetus of Mohammed's inspiration, the fanatical tribes of desert nomads swept east and west subjugating the

then known world and conquering Europe westward to the Straits of Gibraltar. Europe owes the beginning of its present civilization, to the Arabs.

Ezekiel, in the 24th verse, describes the Moham-medan mosques:—“That thou hast also built unto thee an eminent place, and hast made thee an high place in every street.” Also in the 31st verse: “In that thou buildest thine eminent place in the head of every way, and makest thine high place in every street ; and hast not been as an harlot, in that thou scornest hire.”

This clearly refers to the Mohammedans, who, literally, have built their mosques and places of worship “in the head of every way,” at the head of every street, as an inspection of cities in Moham-medan countries will attest. The Hebrews could not have been intended in this respect, nor have they furnished any literal fulfillment of the prophecy.

To the Mohammedans, God promised to renew the covenant by establishing an everlasting one, as we see in the 60th verse: “Nevertheless I will remember my covenant with thee in the days of thy youth, and I will establish unto thee an everlasting covenant.” God also promised that after giving this everlasting covenant, both sisters, the elder and the younger will unite together in the new covenant. These two sisters are the great Mo-hammedan sects, the Shiites and Sunnites mentioned in the 61st verse: “Then thou shalt remember thy ways, and be ashamed when thou

shalt receive thy sisters, thine elder and thy younger; and I will give them unto thee for daughters, but not by thy covenant. And I will establish my covenant with thee; and thou shalt know that I am the Lord."

It is evident to the devout and careful student of prophecy, that God the Almighty has revealed in advance, through His messengers, not only the great events of history, but also many details of less importance, which, by their accurate fulfillment, have borne witness to the truth of prophetic inspiration. The appearance of Mohammed and his teaching which changed the thought, religious belief and government of the Eastern hemisphere; that tremendous religious and political upheaval, which has no parallel in human history, could not have been overlooked by the prophets, while so many minor events received their minute attention. When we consider what Mohammed taught and accomplished; when we remember that his mission was to lift mankind from idolatry and spiritual ignorance, to the light of belief in a living and Supreme God; and that the truth he uttered, became the foundation belief of nearly three hundred millions of human beings, we begin to realize the purpose God has accomplished in raising up this man of the desert to speak in His cause. Even if Mohammed had been a false prophet, his appearance, on account of its important results, would have been duly prophesied and foretold. The fact is, Mohammedanism received full measure of attention from the prophets. Although the inspired

utterances concerning this religion are plentiful, the most vivid and convincing, is the prophecy of Christ, in the 12th chapter of Revelations:—"And there appeared a great wonder in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars; And she being with child cried, travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered. And there appeared another wonder in heaven; and behold a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns and seven crowns upon his heads. And his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth; and the dragon stood before the woman which was ready to be delivered, for to devour her child as soon as it was born. And she brought forth a man child, who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron; and her child was caught up unto God and to his throne. And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred and threescore days."

"And when the dragon saw that he was cast unto the earth, he persecuted the woman that brought forth the man child. And to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent. And the serpent cast out of his mouth water as a flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away of the flood. And the earth helped the woman, and the

earth opened her mouth, and swallowed up the flood which the dragon cast out of his mouth. And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ."

This prophecy concerns two events of great importance ; the contemporary appearance of Mohammedanism and the Church of Rome, which should war against each other. The "woman" symbolizes a nationality or rather, a religion. The same symbolical use of "daughter" and "virgin" may be found in the scriptures. Thus in Isaiah, 47th chapter, "the daughter of the Chaldeans;" in various other places, "the daughter of Zion;" "the virgin which will bring forth a child Immanuel, or God with us." These symbols signify a religion or nationality. The woman "clothed with the sun," the "moon under her feet," and twelve stars upon her head, represents Mohammedanism, from the fact that the emblems of Persia and Turkey, where Mohammedanism had its birth, development and history, are the sun and moon respectively. The flags of these nations contain these emblems today. The crown of twelve stars also symbolizes Mohammedanism, for the reason that twelve Imams appeared in regular succession, from the time of Mohammed, and their teachings constitute the present life and basis of this great religion.

The dragon is the Church of Rome, which appeared in history at the same time as Mohammedan-

ism. The seven heads and ten horns are the seven powers and ten ecclesiastical principalities, over which the Pope had dominion in the seventh century. History shows that Pope Boniface III was invested with supreme, civil and ecclesiastical power, by the Emperor Phocis, 607 A. D. Mohammed lived 570 to 632 A. D.

In "Light for the Last Days" by Guinness, page 23 :— "The Papacy and Mohammedanism rose contemporaneously with the ten horns of the Roman beast; in other words, they originated at the same time as did the kingdom of modern Europe—that is on the fall of the western Roman empire. They have consequently already lasted for over twelve centuries, and their destruction is to be accomplished by the second advent of Christ Himself, and to be immediately followed by the establishment of the kingdom of God on earth. The reign of these two politico-religious dynasties constitutes the last phase of Gentile power presented in prophecy. Both have for more than twelve centuries opposed and blasphemed God and His truth, persecuted His Saints, defiled His sanctuary, literal or spiritual, and trodden down the holy city."

These are therefore, the "two wonders" which appeared in heaven at the same time; Mohammedanism, dating from the Hegira 622 A. D. and Papacy founded 607 A. D. If we examine history minutely, it will show that Mohammed announced his mission more than ten years before his flight 622 A. D., which proves the fact, that these two

"wonders" appeared precisely and literally at the same time.

By the interpretation of the statement that the dragon drew with him the third part of the stars of heaven, we learn that this proportion of the followers of Christ, fell with the Church of Rome, from a spiritual attitude to a material one.

From the woman, was to be born a child, which the dragon stood ready to devour. The divinity of the man-child born from Mohammedanism, is proved by the statement that "He was to rule all nations with a rod of iron," which is always the symbol of the Omnipotent truth of God. Furthermore, to establish His divinity, the child was "caught up unto God and to His throne."

The efforts of the Church of Rome to destroy Mohammedanism and the child to be born of that religion, are shown further by the serpent casting out of his mouth, "water as a flood" to carry her away. Also, in the 13th verse, the dragon's persecution of the woman is noted. History proves this literally. Beginning in the seventh century and lasting five hundred years, were the Crusades, those vast campaigns organized by the Church of Rome, in Europe, for the purpose of wresting the Holy Land from the Mohammedans. In addition to this effort by force of arms, there were sent out by the Pope, armies of monks and missionaries to extirpate Mohammedanism by teachings. These teachings are symbolized as the "flood of water." With what result? Absolutely without success. The history of every Crusade, records defeat and

disaster, and during the five hundred years of these holy wars, over two million and a half of the flower and chivalry of European nations, perished. "The earth helped the women and swallowed up the flood from the dragon's mouth," because the Almighty arm of God shielded and protected Mohammedanism from destruction, until the accomplishment of His purposes ; until the Manifestation of God should be born from her.

"The woman fled into the wilderness." The desert and wilderness have proved the safeguard and preservation of Mohammed's religion. Remote, inaccessible to force of arms, for twelve hundred years, this instrument of God's intention has been protected and nourished, in order that the man child should come from it, after which, its function and mission accomplished, it should be stricken with death, and give way to the higher light of God's truth and the future purposes of His Almighty wisdom. "To the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness and be nourished." By this prophetic symbol, it is shown that Mohammedanism should be endowed with military power, by which she might defend herself. History repeated and verified this in fearful truth, when the desert Arabian tribes, with fanatical zeal, swept Europe westward to Spain and subdued nearly every nation of the east. Not only was Mohammedanism unconquered, but it became itself, a resistless conqueror.

This prophecy from the divinely illumined

words of Jesus Christ, proves absolutely that the Manifestation of God should appear from the Mohammedans, as He did in Beha 'U'llah, who was born in Persia, the very centre and nursery of that religion. Not only in this fact was the prophecy of Christ perfectly fulfilled, but also in point of time, Beha 'U'llah's appearance accurately accorded with the revelation uttered eighteen hundred years before His coming. The time proofs will be shown in the following chapter.

The question frequently arises, "why should the Manifestation of God appear from such a degraded and corrupt religion as Mohammedanism?" "Why did He not appear in the highest and most enlightened nation?" Although the answer to these questionings lies in the Almighty purpose of God Himself, whose "ways are higher than our ways," yet, by the light of our finite reasoning, we may see clearly the wisdom of His appearance exactly as He came.

The prophets of Syria and Palestine foretold His coming from the East, but the messengers of God who appeared in India and the far East, said He should come from the West. Persia lying between Syria and India, exactly meets the truth and requirements.

Throughout the universe, there is a natural principle in operation, by which life and growth are continually springing from death and decay. New forms are ever springing from the dust and ruins of useless organisms. The coming of great men from poor and lowly sources, seems to be a

carrying-out of this principle of natural law. As a rule, the greatest men have had humble and obscure beginnings. The seed must rot and die in the ground, before the living germ can spring from it. So too, the Blessed Tree of Life sprang from the decayed and dying seed of Mohammedanism. Ezekiel said that from the dry tree should spring the tree under whose branches the fowls of every wing should find shelter.

Again, if the Manifestation of God had appeared in the most advanced and civilized nation ; if He had come from the highest and most exalted earthly position, it would be a weak proof of His power, glory and divinity, for the reason that the revelation of His divinity, to be conclusive, must be independent of earthly influence and advantage. To manifest spiritual glory, He must be cut from world dominion and power which is of the earth, earthly. Coming as He did and as Christ came, from the lowest sources, His power and divinity were established independent of earthly advantage, thus proving His personality as a Manifestation of God. By the very neutrality of His coming ; by His appearance from the least important of nations and peoples, He annulled all jealousies and appeared as a conciliation to the varying ideas of the whole world.



حضرت غصن الله الاكبر محمد علي

MUHAMMAD-ALI EFFENDI
Gusn-i-Akbar (The Mightiest Branch)

— Taken 1900

CHAPTER XXVI.

TIME OF HIS COMING.

Beha 'U'llah, the Manifestation of God, appeared and established His kingdom upon earth, at the exact time announced by Jesus Christ and the other prophets. Revelations 12-6: "And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she had a place prepared of God that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred and threescore days." It is admitted by all biblical students, that a day, in prophetic utterance, signifies a year. Ezekiel 4-6: "Thou shalt bear the iniquity of the House of Judah, forty days; I have appointed thee each day for a year."

The above mentioned prophecy by Christ, corresponds exactly (if each day is considered a lunar year), with Mohammed's revelation that Elijah should appear in this century, and in expectation of which, the Mohammedans in Turkey and Persia, made preparations to receive him, just as the Millerites of this country went forth to welcome the coming of the Kingdom of God in 1844. The year 1260 A. H. corresponds with 1844 A. D. The East Indians had similar prophecies announcing the appearance of a new religion from the West, and a study of all inspired revelation concerning the final incarnation of Deity, will show that every announcement of this great event indicated the present century as "the time."

In "The Great Tribulation" page 16, the Rev. John Cumming says: "Several extracts so far seem to authenticate and vindicate this conclusion and you will take them, of course, for what they are worth: First, Lady Hester Stanhope, in a letter from Syria to her physician, in the year 1827, says: 'All those who come may go back in the Turkish year, 1245.' And the physician adds, in a note: 'It would appear from this, that Lady Hester Stanhope expected the accomplishment of some great event in the year of the Hegira, 1245.' The late Mr. Irving, deeply deceived in many things, extravagant in more, but a man of splendid genius, of unquestionable piety, the victim of a belief that everybody was good and great, and incapable of a suspicion that anybody could deceive, said: 'Not only amongst the Turks in Europe, but all over the East, the Mahometan power is wasting away; and like all doomed things begins to be conscious of its approaching end; insomuch that they say the Ottoman Porte is paralyzed with prophecies of its speedy ruin. Is it not so written, the Turks say, in your Christian Book, that our religion is to come to an end within forty years? And what is remarkable, a friend of mine, who traveled lately into central Africa, and stood on the Himalaya mountains in India, by the holy pool where never Christian had dwelt before, found there also an expectation of a religion from the West which in the space of forty years was to possess the earth, remarks which they made to me with their own lips.'" also page 17: "Now the African traveler or friend

to whom he refers, was Major Denham or Captain Clapperton; they were in Africa in the year 1823, and 40 years added to this would bring us down to 1863." Expected from the West by the East Indians and from the East by Europeans, Beha 'U'llah appeared in Persia a country lying between these two extremes.

Elijah, the Bab, prophesied that "He whom God shall Manifest" would appear after a time corresponding to the numerical value of the Arabic word "Heen." As the value of this word is 68, the Bab signified the appearance of the Manifestation in 1269 A. H. that is to say nine years after the appearance of the Bab himself, who, as already shown, declared his teachings in 1844. (1260 A. H.). The Manifestation of Beha 'U'llah in Baghdad in 1853 (1269 A. H.), fulfilled this prophecy literally.

The Bab also said that "He whom God shall manifest" would declare Himself to all believers, nineteen years after the commencement of his (the Bab's) ministry. The revelation of Beha's Divinity to His followers, took place in a garden outside of the city of Baghdad, in 1863, exactly nineteen years after the Bab arose in Persia in 1844. This second Manifestation of Beha 'U'llah, was likewise a fulfillment of Ezekiel's prophetic vision near the River Chebar. This river, originally known as the Khabor (see Ancient Geography) has its source West of Baghdad and empties into the Euphrates.

The universal manifestation by Beha 'U'llah, in Adrianopole in 1867, was the revelation of His Divinity to the whole world, for at that time He be-

gan to summon the kings and rulers of the earth to His spiritual banquet, announcing Himself to be the Incarnation of the Everlasting Father. This is the year named by Christ; the year to which all Messiah prophecies point.

In "The Great Tribulation" page 9, Cumming says :

"What I shall endeavor to show now is this, that whatever theories of the fulfillment of these dates are held, whether they fix the commencement at this period, or at some other period, nearly all concur in one remarkable conclusion, namely, that 1867 is to be the great crisis, the testing crisis in the events of history, in the fulfillment of prophecy, and in the experience of mankind. What I wish to show is, that the best, the wisest, and the most thoughtful of writers on the subject of prophecy, however much they may differ in certain details—and they do differ—nearly all coincide in this, that 1867 is to be a great crisis."

In Revelations 12-14: "To the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent."

This prophecy clearly appoints 1867, as the time of the appearance of the Manifestation. By its terms, Mohammedanism, the "woman" was to be protected against the church of Rome, 1260 years. A "time" astronomically is 360 solar years. Three and a half "times" are therefore specified. Pope Boniface Third received the title of universal bishop

from the Emperor Phocis, in 607 A. D. Exactly 1260 years after this assumption of absolute authority by the church of Rome, Beha 'U'llah the Manifestation, revealed himself in Adrianople (1867).

This prophecy by Christ, agrees with the utterance of Daniel 12-6: "One said to the man clothed in linen, which was upon the waters of the river; how long shall it be to the end of these wonders?" In Christ's prophecy, it is said "There appeared a great wonder in heaven;" also "there appeared another wonder in heaven."

The "Man clothed in linen" answered that "it shall be for a time, times and a half (1260 years); and when he shall have accomplished to scatter the power of the holy people, all these things shall be finished." This corresponds with the Christ prophecy in Revelations. From the time of the appearance of the two "wonders" Mohammedanism and Papacy, 1260 years should elapse, after which the "Man-Child" would appear, heralded by the sign of the persecution of the "holy people," all of which facts and conditions were fulfilled in Beha 'U'llah the Manifestation of God, who declared Himself after the persecution and scattering of the Babis.

Daniel evidently did not know where to commence the calculation of the period named by the man clothed in linen. In the 8th verse — "And I heard but I understood not: then said I, O my Lord, what shall be the end of these things?" The basis of calculation is given from the appearance of the "wonders" and the sign of these

"wonders" is that which will be accomplished as mentioned in the following verse: "And from the time that the daily sacrifice shall be taken away, and the abomination that maketh desolate set up, there shall be a thousand two hundred and ninety days."

By this we know that the prophetic date is founded upon the appearance of the "wonder" and the sign of it is the overthrow of the temples of the Parsee fire-worshippers; the abolition of their daily sacrifice, which, history records, was accomplished by Mohammed. The basis of calculation is therefore the Christian date of the appearance of Papacy, 607 A. D. Even considering the question from the standpoint that the abolition of sacrifice refers to the religious ceremonies of the Hebrews, we arrive at the same conclusion, for the Mohammedans, at the same time, conquered Syria and Palestine and appropriated the Hebrew temples to their own worship and uses. It is clear therefore that the foundation date in the prophecies of Christ and of Daniel, is the Christian basis of chronology—607 A. D.—at which time, both "wonders," Mohammedanism and Papacy were the all-important factors in history.

In the 12th verse of Daniel's prophecy, "Blessed is he that waiteth and cometh to the thousand three hundred five and thirty days." The year 1335 from the Hegira, corresponds to 1917 A. D., at which time peace shall reign upon the earth and the wars of nations cease. Beha 'U'llah prohibited war and ordered the settlement of national disputes

by arbitration. He also promised that the "most great peace shall come."

In testimony of the fulfillment of His word, the Spirit of God is impelling mankind toward that outcome with mighty speed. As the prophets indicated, the final condition in which peace shall be established, must be brought about by unparalleled violence of war and bloodshed, which any observer of European affairs at the present day, can see rapidly approaching. History is being written at tremendous speed, human independence is precipitating the final scenes in the drama of blood which is shortly destined to drench Europe and Asia, after which the world will witness the dawn of millennial peace, the natural, logical and prophetic outcome of present human conditions.

In "Light for The Last Days," page 224, Guinness says: "The secret things belong to God. It is not for us to say. But there can be no question that those who live to see this year 1917, will have reached one of the most important, perhaps the most momentous, of these terminal years of crisis."

1867 was appointed in the 8th chapter of Daniel the year of the greatest Manifestation: "Then I heard one saint speaking, and another saint said unto that certain saint which spake, How long shall be the vision concerning the daily sacrifice, and the transgression of desolation, to give both the sanctuary and the host to be trodden under foot? And he said unto me, Unto two thousand and three hundred days; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed."

2300 years forward from the time of the cleansing of the sanctuary under Nehemiah—433 B. C.—brings 1867 A. D., the date of the Manifestation by Beha 'U'llah to the world.

Cumming says: "The Great Tribulation" page 18—"As to what the uncle of the Bishop of Ripon said in this respect. If we reckon the 2300 days in Daniel from Ezra's commission B. C. 457, they would expire in 1843; but if we reckon them as we should, from the last cleansing of Nehemiah in B. C. 433, then they expire in 1867, which I conceive to be the period of the restoration of the Jewish nation, the cleansing of the sanctuary, and the preparations for the millennial dawn and sunshine."

The most convincing proof of this calculation lies in the fact that the result attained corresponds with other prophecies of Daniel, and with prophecies of Christ and Mohammed.

The Hebrews expect Shiloh the Messiah in 3996, the "end of the days." This is 1892 of our reckoning, the year in which Beha 'U'llah, the Manifestation of God, departed from earth to the regions of might and glory. This is the year which marks the end of the sixth day or period of labor and the beginning of the seventh day of rest; the end of the six thousand years and the commencement of the "new dispensation" or the Millennium. This is the fullness of time and the day of Judgment. In 1892, God the Infinite Creator and Judge, having revealed through Beha 'U'llah the full measure of spiritual knowledge and truth; having

poured upon the earth the deluge of the water of His teachings to the children of men, completed the revelations which have been spoken in part by the mouths of His holy prophets since the world began. "And on the seventh day God ended His work which He had made; and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which he had made."

Upon these grounds and according to the teachings of Beha 'U'llah, there will be no further revelations from God during the whole of the "Sabbath Day," the Millennial period. Christ said, John 6-45: "It is written in the prophets, and they shall be all taught of God." Our spiritual knowledge during the Millennium, must therefore proceed from God the Father, and from none else. Upon this point, Beha 'U'llah said "Forget all things beside Me and be comforted by My Spirit: This is from the essence of My Command."

Although the thousand years began with the departure of the Manifestation in 1892, the commencement of the "Great Peace" will be in 1917.

Totten said that the end of the world would come in 1892, for in the Mosaic account in the Ollam books, it is said that Messiah will appear 565 years after the year 3431, which makes 3996. This year 3996 corresponds with 1892 A. D., and the remarkable thing in this account is, that the number 565 correspond with the word "Hoah," that is to say "Jehovah."

The vision of the image written in the second chapter of Daniel and the vision of the tree, in the

fourth chapter, have the same significance concerning the appearance of the Kingdom of God. The time of its coming is shown in the latter chapter to be after "seven times" had passed over the head of Nebuchadnezzar. As a "time" is 360 years, therefore 2520 years must elapse between Nebuchadnezzar and the establishment of the Kingdom.

In the "New Era at Hand" page 3, Dimbleby says: "What then are the means by which we expect the end of the present dispensation? In other words, what are the prophecies of scripture which we have to notice? I answer that they are a period called 'seven times'."

In "Light for the Last Days," page 25, Guinness says: "The times of the Gentiles constitute a week, each of whose days is a year of years or 360 years, and whose entire duration is therefore 2520 years." Again page 26—"The symbol of the fourfold image declared that these Gentile empires were to be succeeded by the kingdom of God of heaven, but it did not reveal, or even intimate, when, or after what lapse of time this should be. A subsequent vision granted to Nebuchadnezzar did so in mystery. He saw a tree, which he was told symbolized himself, cut down, and its stump left to be wet with the dew of heaven, and its portion with the beasts in the grass of the earth, its heart changed from a man's heart, and a beast's heart given it, until 'seven times' should pass over it."

Also page 28 :—"Arithmetically, this (2520) is a

very notable number, one peculiarly fit to be the basis of chronologic prophecy. It is altogether unique—a king among numbers. It is the least common multiple of the first ten numbers—the first in the entire series of numbers which is exactly divisible without remainder by all the first ten numerals. Thus it is adapted to harmonize several series of periods of different orders and magnitudes in a way that no other conceivable number could do. Is it by chance that this number has been chosen to be the vertebral column of prophetic chronology?

“We have proved elsewhere that this same chronological system pervades all nature and all revelation; that it stamps the Levitical as well as the historic portions of scripture: and that indeed the typical Levitical chronology is the clue to the whole comprehensive system, a system which rules alike among the orbs of heaven, the laws of biology, and the changes of history. Its operation can be discerned in almost every science, and it regulates the lives of individuals as well as the lives of nations. It is the law of completion in weeks.”

We must conclude from study of these prophecies of Daniel that Nebuchadnezzar himself, the “head of gold” is the starting point and foundation date of this chronological estimate of the period of the Gentiles.

Guinness said: “Clearly the time of the end of the events revealed to Daniel. His prophecies foretold the events of twenty-five centuries, the existence of the Babylonian, Persian, Grecian and Roman empires, and represent these as occupying the entire

interval between the prophet's own days, and the day of the resurrection of the dead, and the establishment of the glorious and everlasting kingdom of God on earth."

From the date of Nebuchadnezzar's birth, 628 B. C. "seven times" or 2520 years forward, will bring us to 1892 A. D. the year of the departure of the Manifestation and the completion of His organization of the Kingdom of God.

Zoroaster prophesied the appearance of the Manifestation of God from the land of Nur, which prophecy was fulfilled in Beha 'U'llah, who was born of the high lineage of the House of Nur.

As in Beha 'U'llah all signs and conditions of prophecy were fulfilled, especially the utterances of Jesus Christ, it is obligatory upon every Christian who believes and accepts our scriptures as the revealed Word of God, to acknowledge Him as the Manifestation of the Everlasting Father. If he was not the promised One, the Messiah, the prophecies of our bible are not to be relied upon. Believing in Him from the impregnable proof of scripture alone, we will not be at fault, for as the revealed Word of God and our only guiding light, we cannot be held responsible for accepting whatever is in harmony with and in fulfillment of its teachings.

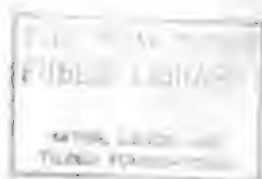


حضرت غصن اللہ الاطهر ضیاء اللہ

ZIA 'ULLAH EFFENDI

Gusn-i-At'har (The Holiest Branch)

Departed October, 1898



CHAPTER XXVII.

THE HOUSEHOLD.

The prophecies of scripture teach us that when the Everlasting Father, God—Mighty One, Prince of Peace, My Servant David shall manifest Himself upon this earth and establish His Kingdom, He shall have a family, a household. Isaiah 45: 11 —“Thus saith the Lord, the Holy One of Israel, and his Maker, Ask me of things to come concerning my sons, and concerning the work of my hands command ye me.”

Isaiah 66: 9—“Shall I bring to the birth, and not cause to bring forth? saith the Lord: shall I cause to bring forth, and shut the womb? saith thy God.”

Isaiah 9: 7 (Old version) “Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the Lord of Hosts will perform this.” (New Version, Cheyne's) “Increased is the government and to peace there is no end, upon the throne of David and throughout his kingdom, in establishing and supporting it by justice and by righteousness from henceforth even for ever. The jealousy of Jehovah Sabaoth will perform this.”

We learn from this prophecy that the Kingdom

established upon the throne of David, (Beha 'U'llah, the Beloved), shall be eternal in power and unending in peace. The Kingdom must be supported therefore, in righteousness and justice by His Word, strictly kept by His own children and those who live with them in the Shadow of His Commandments. Professor Cheyne says in "The Prophecies of Isaiah," page 63—that from the sentence "from henceforth even for ever" we gain two meanings: "Two meanings are exegetically possible: 1—that the Messiah shall live an immortal life on earth, and 2—that there shall be an uninterrupted succession of princes of his house."

The first view is not tenable for the reason that we have other prophecies which announce the departure of the Manifestation, David the Beloved. The continuance of His Kingdom therefore can only be possible through depending upon His Utterances which are the Representative of His Supreme Self and everlasting truths.

The following are plain prophecies that when the Father, David the Beloved, will manifest Himself, He will have a family, a household. Zechariah 12: 10 and 12—"And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications" "And the land shall mourn, every family apart; the family of the house of David apart." Zechariah 13, 1. "In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David,"

"David" signifies "God the Beloved" and is one of the titles of the Manifestation. It has no

reference whatever to David, King of the Hebrews. In the 34th chapter of Ezekiel the prophet uses the same title to announce the appearance of the Everlasting Father, when neglect of the spiritual flocks by the leaders and teachers of religion, necessitate the coming of God Himself to judge and rule them. "Woe be to the shepherds of Israel, that do feed themselves; should not the shepherds feed the flocks?" For this reason, God Himself promised to come under the title of "David" ("God the Beloved"). Ezekiel 34: 20—"Therefore thus saith the Lord God unto them, Behold I, even I, will judge between the fat cattle and between the lean cattle. Because ye have thrust with side and with shoulder, and pushed all the diseased with your horns, till ye have scattered them abroad; Therefore will I save my flock, and they shall no more be a prey; and I will judge between cattle and cattle. And I will set up one shepherd over them, and he shall feed them, even my servant David; he shall feed them, and he shall be their shepherd. And I the Lord will be their God, and my servant David a prince among them; I the Lord have spoken it. And I will make with them a covenant of peace, and will cause the evil beasts to cease out of the land; and they shall dwell safely in the wilderness, and sleep in the woods. And I will make them and the places round about my hill a blessing; and I will cause the shower to come down in his season: there shall be showers of blessing. And the tree of the field shall yield her fruit, and the earth shall yield her increase, and they

shall be safe in their land, and shall know that I am the Lord, when I have broken the bands of their yoke, and delivered them out of the hand of those that served themselves of them. "And they shall no more be a prey to the heathen, neither shall the beast of the land devour them; but they shall dwell safely, and none shall make them afraid. And I will raise up for them a plant of renown, and they shall no more be consumed with hunger in the land, neither bear the shame of the heathen any more. Thus shall they know that I the Lord their God am with them, and that they, even the house of Israel, are my people, saith the Lord God. And ye my flock, the flock of my pasture, are men, and I am your God, saith the Lord God."

"My Servant David" unquestionably has no reference to David the Hebrew King who died long before the time of Ezekiel. It is furthermore apparent that the promised coming was to take place in the future. It must be therefore clearly understood that "My Servant David," "The Prince," "The Plant of Renown" must be the Manifestation of God Himself from the statements—"I even I, will both search my sheep, and seek them out." "And ye my flock, the flock of my pasture, are men, and I am your God, saith the Lord God."

Again in the 36th chapter of Ezekiel, the same prophetic statement is made by the Infinite God through His prophet. "And David, My Servant, shall be King over them." Also "My Servant David shall be their Prince forever." And "I will be their God, and they shall be my people."

These are clear teachings that God the Everlasting Father will reveal and manifest Himself upon the earth to save His flocks from the hands of unjust shepherds and spiritual advisers ; and that His Manifestation shall be called "David" or the "Beloved of God."

By comparing these prophecies with the teachings of Christ, we find absolute correspondence in announcement ; and complete disproof of any possible claim that Christ was "David." Christ said that the Lord of the Vineyard would come to redeem and judge His Vineyard, exactly as Ezekiel said that God the Shepherd would come Himself to redeem and judge His flocks. We are taught beyond doubt that Christ did not claim to be that "Lord of the Vineyard" and "Shepherd David," and stronger proof than this could not be demanded.

By establishing His household, Beha 'U'llah perfected the laws of man, grafted us to His glorious Temple, the Tree of Life, became practically our Father as one of our race and fulfilled the prophecies of scripture.

From Him descended twelve children, three daughters and nine sons. Five sons died before His departure and the following are the names and titles of the seven who lived after Him. The daughters are called "Holy Leaves" and the sons "Branches." "Khanum" signifies lady, and "Effendi" gentleman.

THE HOLY LEAVES.

Behiah Khanum.
Samadiah Khanum.
Shuruck Khanum.

THE BRANCHES.

Abbas Effendi, entitled Gusn-i-Azam. (The
Greatest Branch.)
Muhammad-Ali Effendi, entitled Gusn-i-Akbar.
(The Mightiest Branch.)
Zia 'Ullah Effendi, entitled Gusn-i-At'har. (The
Holiest Branch.)
Badi 'Ullah Effendi, entitled Gusn-i-Anwar. (The
Most Luminous Branch.)



حضرة غصن الله الانور بديع الله

BADI 'ULLAH EFFENDI
Gusn-i-Anwar (The Most Luminous Branch)
Taken 1900

CHAPTER XXVIII.

THE DEPARTURE.

In the month of May, 1892 A. D., on the 16th day of the month, according to the date of the Greek orthodox church, which corresponds to the 28th according to the Western Christian church, the Manifestation, Beha 'U'llah, bade farewell to this earthly sphere and departed to the regions of Might and Glory, in the spiritual realms.

His death took place in the palace of Behjé, outside of the fortification at Acre. His blessed remains were buried in a house, just a few yards from the palace.

The Scriptures contain many prophecies concerning the departure of the Manifestation. Zechariah, 12th chapter, verses 10 to 14, says: "And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and supplications; and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced [or look upon me who has been oppressed for them], and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his first-born. In that day shall there be a great mourning in Jerusalem, as the mourning of Hadadrimmon in the valley of Megiddon. And the land shall mourn, every family apart; the family of the house of David apart, and their wives apart; the family of the house

of Nathan apart, and their wives apart; the family of the house of Levi apart, and their wives apart; the family of Shimei apart, and their wives apart; all the families that remain, every family apart, and their wives apart."

In these verses there is a prophecy about the death of a great Personage, whose demise would be a great calamity to the people of God. But from the mercy of God, "He will pour His Spirit of grace and supplication upon the House of David and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem," in order that they may be enabled to bear that catastrophe. Yet "they mourned for Him as one mourneth for his only son, with great bitterness, and the mourning was great as the mourning of Hadadrimmon in the Valley of Megiddon, and the twelve tribes, every tribe apart, and their wives apart, mourned for him."

Now, some Christians have referred this prophecy to the death of Jesus Christ, but it is plain that it does not correspond to His death, because when Christ was crucified there was no mourning like the mourning of Hadadrimmon in the Valley of Megiddon, in Jerusalem; and we know that the twelve tribes did not mourn for Him, every tribe apart, and their wives apart. On the contrary, this prophecy agrees with the prophecy in the New Testament,—Revelation, chapter 1, verses 7 and 8, which plainly foretold the coming of the Everlasting Father, the Almighty God, and His departure, as follows: "Behold, He cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see Him, and they also which pierced Him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of Him.

Even so, Amen." "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty."

The Personage to whom this prophecy refers is the Manifestation, Beha 'Ullah, David the Beloved, and the prophecy tells us that at His death, He will pour upon His holy household, the House of David, His own family, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the City of Akka, the Spirit of Grace and Supplications, that they may endure His departure. In reality, when He departed His holy household, and the believers in Akka and over all the earth, mourned for Him, the men apart and their wives apart; and it was a great mourning, greater than the mourning of Hadadrimmon in the valley of Megiddon.

It was proved conclusively in the chapter on "The Household" that David does not mean David the King of the Hebrews, but the "Beloved," Beha 'U'llah, the Everlasting Father, as was said by Ezekiel in the 34th chapter, verses 20 to 31. It is well known that Ezekiel lived and prophesied long after the death of David, the King of the Jews, and this prophecy cannot refer to him, for he died long before the prophecy was uttered. Besides, this prophecy is to come to pass in a remote period in the future, and the Servant, David, is the chosen Servant mentioned in Isaiah. This is the Manifestation of the Being, the Shepherd of the Infinite, appointed to watch the flocks (mankind), and feed them in green pastures, because He is the Lord Himself.

In the 20th verse Ezekiel said : "I, even I, will judge between the fat cattle and between the lean cattle." Because the shepherds whom He appointed to feed His flock, instead of performing their duty have scattered them abroad, and "thrust with side and with shoulder and pushed all the diseased with their horns." This means that the spiritual leaders did not feed the masses with the true spiritual food, but rather taught them vain imaginations and superstitions, and so scattered them into many divisions, religions and denominations. Thus they proved that they were dishonest and inefficient husbandmen, therefore for the salvation of mankind, the Infinite promised in this prophecy, to send them a just, upright Shepherd who would feed them in green pastures, and lead them to the true path, and father them to one religion, one fold ; and that Shepherd is His Servant David.

Who is this Servant David ? He is God Himself, the Lord of Hosts, the Everlasting Father, as it is said in the 31st verse of the same chapter of Ezekiel : "And ye my flock, the flock of my pasture, are men and I am your God, saith the Lord God." This David, the Beloved, is the Lord of the Vineyard, concerning whose coming Christ prophesied ; —that He would come and deliver the vineyard from the hands of the dishonest husbandmen, the flock from the dishonest shepherds. The prophecy of Ezekiel about the dishonest shepherds and the prophecy of Christ about the dishonest husbandmen are one and the same.

Again we see that the David, who is mentioned in the 12th chapter of Zechariah is the Manifestation Himself, and that after His departure, His holy household and all the believers will mourn a great mourning, and be in bitterness over Him, as did take place when He departed in 1892.

For the further elucidation of this fact, and as an additional proof of the statement above made, let us read and explain the 13th chapter of Zechariah,—
“In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and for uncleanness. And it shall come to pass in that day, saith the Lord of hosts, that I will cut off the names of the idols out of the land, and they shall no more be remembered : and I will also cause the prophets and the unclean spirit to pass out of the land. And it shall come to pass, that when any shall yet prophesy, then his father and his mother that begat him shall say unto him, Thou shalt not live ; for thou speakest lies in the name of the Lord : and his father and his mother that begat him shall thrust him through when he prophesieth. And it shall come to pass in that day, that the prophets shall be ashamed every one of his visions, when he hath prophesied ; neither shall they wear a rough garment to deceive : But he shall say, I am no prophet, I am an husbandman ; for man taught me to keep cattle from my youth. And one shall say unto him, What are these wounds in thine hands ? Then he shall answer, Those with which I was wounded in the house of my friends. Awake, O sword, against

my shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith the Lord of Hosts: smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered: and I will turn mine hand upon the little ones. And it shall come to pass, that in all the land, saith the Lord, two parts therein shall be cut off and die; but the third shall be left therein. And I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried: they shall call on my name, and I will hear them: I will say, It is my people: and they shall say, The Lord is my God."

This chapter teaches us that after the departure of the Beloved, there shall be a fountain opened to His own house, to the house of David, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness.

It also teaches us that after the departure of the Manifestation, there would be no need of prophets on the earth, for God shall cause the prophets and unclean spirit to pass out of the land. The reason of this is that the mission of the prophets and the messengers whom God sent to this earth, to teach the people is fulfilled. Their sole function was to teach and prophesy about the greatest Appearance of the Manifestation of the Everlasting Father. The Everlasting Father has already manifested Himself in the human form, and taught us the spiritual facts. Jesus Christ prophesied and said that while he taught us in parables when the Father came He would teach us facts. And as the Father accomplished, for our race, all that is needed and established His kingdom, and departed, there-

fore there could be no necessity, or rather no function, for another Manifestation to perform. The teachings from the Manifestation are perfect, and we know from other prophecies that His kingdom on the earth shall continue for a duration of one thousand years; and in this day, the Sabbath day—the millennium—which is a thousand years, if any one (we are taught by this chapter) will claim to be a prophet, and will prophesy, his father and his mother that begat him shall say unto him:—“He shall not live, for he speaks lies in the name of the Lord: and his father and his mother that begat him shall thrust him through when he prophesieth.”

This shows plainly that should any person lay claim to any power of prophecy, or should in any way claim to be a manifestation, either great or small, we have the right to apply to him the words of Zechariah.

Beha 'U'llah, Glory be to Him, taught us in His utterances in Kitab-i-Akdas that every one who claims a thing, that is to say, claims to be a manifestation, a prophet, during the millennium is a lying impostor.

“Whosoever claims a mission [matter] before the completion of a full thousand years is in truth a lying impostor. . . . Whosoever shall interpret this verse, or explain it otherwise than it has been revealed obviously, is indeed deprived of the Spirit of God, and His mercy which preceded the worlds.” See tablet as translated by Professor Browne, in the “Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society,” October, 1889, page 884.

And also He said in the Tablet which is headed: "Oh! Creator of every wonderful thing." "He who expects a Manifestation directly after Me, is of the lost."

The same chapter teaches us, also, that the prophets in that day shall be ashamed every one of his vision, when he hath prophesied, and he will not wear a rough garment to deceive, but the honest one like Amos, shall say: "I am no prophet, I am an husbandman, for man taught me to keep cattle from my youth." He will never claim to be a prophet; he will never deceive; he will never be proud, and he will plainly declare his mission. That is to say that he is only a teacher, an husbandman in the vineyard of God; teaching the teachings of God Himself, and not his own teachings, for God, the Manifestation, in a man's form, is that man who taught him to keep cattle from his youth.

There is also a great significance in the verse which says: "And one shall say unto him, what are these wounds which are in thine hands?" Then he shall answer: "Those with which I was wounded in the house of my friends." This means that the sign of the honest believer is the wounds; that is to say, that he may be persecuted and wounded standing on the side of God, and his persecutions and wounds are caused by the friends. We know that the believers, the followers of Beha are called by Him Ahbab, that is to say, friends.

Beha 'U'llah, Glory be to Him, taught us in His sacred utterances in different tablets, and emphatic-

ally in Kitab-i-Akdas, that after the setting of the Sun of Truth and Revelation, if we differ about any religious question, we must search His Word, and, using that word as a scale, weigh that question by that Balance, and thus we will discover from what He taught us—what is right from what is wrong. It is also a plain command that we must depend only upon His utterances, and as they are perfect there is no spiritual question, but what can be rendered intelligible by studying His Word. Therefore there is no need for any other Manifestation after Him through the whole millenium, for what He taught is perfect and suffices for the salvation of the world.

He condemned those who claim a knowledge of the inner and the inmost, in order to impress upon us that there would be no Manifestation directly after Him. "And there are those amongst them who lay claim to the inner and the innermost (mystery). Say, 'O liar.' By God, what thou hast is but husks which we have abandoned to you as bones are abandoned to the dogs!"

It is plain enough to our understanding from the verses of this chapter (Zechariah 13) and those of the chapter preceding that these prophecies do not in any way allude to the death of Jesus, the Nazarene, nor to the events which took place after His death, but they are in reality prophecies about the departure of the Beloved, David, Beha 'U'llah, and about the events which took place after His departure. The remainder of this 13th chapter of Zechariah from the 7th verse to the end of the chapter

is a decisive and indisputable proof that this prophecy belongs not to the Son but to the Father, Beha 'U'llah, for it says: "Awake, Oh sword against my shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow." Who is that shepherd? He is the shepherd David, the Beloved, the Father, and not the Son, as it was proved that David is the Everlasting Father, the Manifestation of the Being. And who is "the man that is my fellow?" He is the Manifestation of God Himself in Himself, the Lord of the vineyard; the Servant of the Being, the man who is the fellow of the Being, the Branch of Eternity and the Ancient of the Days, Beha 'U'llah.

Thus we see that in the Personality of Beha 'U'llah and His Appearance in human form, and in the establishment of His kingdom on earth, and His departure, all the prophecies of the Old and New Testament were fulfilled to the letter. If we believe in Him we will believe in the Old and New Testament, and all the other scriptures, and if we reject Him we will reject them all.

If we accept this great truth and become members of this glorious kingdom of the Almighty Father, it will be our plain duty to show our standard, help His work, spread His sacred Word, and promulgate His commands among His creatures, that they may come and drink from the cup of life of His kingdom. If we do so, we will attain His blessings, for He promised and never has He failed to fulfill His promise. He said in Kitab-i-Akdas—

"Oh people of the earth! when the Sun of my Beauty sets and the firmament of my Form is hid-

den—be not troubled. Arise for the helping of my work and the advancement of my word throughout the worlds. Verily we are with you under all conditions, and will help you with the Truth. Verily we can do this. Whosoever knoweth Me will rise up to serve me—with such uprising—that the hosts of heaven and earth shall not put him down.” And in another place he says,—“Say, Oh people—let not trouble take possession of you when the kingdom of my Epiphany becomes concealed and the waves of the ocean of My Utterances are hushed.—Verily there is in my Epiphany a reason, and in My Occultation another reason which none knoweth, save God—the Incomparable and the All-Knowing. And we shall see you from the most Glorious Horizon and will help whomsoever riseth up for the helping of our work—with Hosts from the Supreme concourse—and a cohort of the Cherubim.”

There are in both the Old and New Testaments many prophecies which will be fulfilled after His departure. We are carefully studying and comparing them with the historical events of this Kingdom. When the time comes they will be published for our benefit and confirmation.

CHAPTER XXIX.

A WORD TO THE BELIEVERS.

The following facts and admonitions, many of which came from the highest authorities, should teach us how to direct our footsteps toward the right path of faithfulness, and aid us to render what is due to God, to God; and what is due to Cæsar, to Cæsar.

O, children of the Kingdom : The Sun of Divinity has shone upon us, when He appeared upon the horizon of this world, clothed in the garment of the Greatest Name; and the Supreme Pen revealed to us that our God, EL ABHA, suffered calamities, imprisonments, exile and persecutions for the salvation of all peoples.

He sacrificed Himself for the eternal Peace of mankind; passed his days in guiding the people of the world to the true Path: revealed in His Holy Books that which will exultingly expand the hearts of the people of true knowledge and understanding, and will guide His creatures to the horizon of Virtue and Mercy.

Hark to what He pronounced in the tablet of Wisdom! Where His tongue gave utterance to the most perfect precepts. "The glory is not in loving yourselves but rather in loving the children of your kind: the virtue is not for him who loves his native land, but rather for him who loves the

whole world." This utterance satisfies those of understanding, and brings the true seekers to a higher spirituality. For there is no doubt that if man would attain this chief glory and acquire this transcendent virtue, he will realize that all people are brothers, will find that all countries are as one native land, will see the lights of the Kingdom shining forth upon all human beings, will perceive the Protection of the Beneficent and Everlasting Father surrounding all His children, and the Kingdom of that Eternal God, enveloping the whole world. See the greatness and wisdom of the following text :—

"Make your mornings better than your evenings, and your to-morrows better than your yesterdays."

Beyond all doubt, He perfected the Wisdom, completed the Grace and revealed to the people of the earth that which will cause them to attain the highest degrees and the supreme attitude of honor. **"Blessed is he who will be enlightened by the lamp of His Revelation. He will ascend to the Heavens of His knowledge and will stand forth to mention His Beauty which irradiates and shines upon His creatures."**

"O, brothers, pure in heart and with lights shining from the horizon of love and faithfulness, what are the duties of the children of this Father, who suffered the direst calamities for the salvation of nations and endured imprisonment for the liberation of the world? Is it our duty to be silent, or inactive after His Supreme Pen summoned every

morning and every evening His creatures to an Everlasting Paradise?

"Is it meet that we sit down and rest after knowing that the Lord has suffered innumerable calamities, exile and imprisonment at the hands of his enemies? By your lives, I say unto you, No!"

Our duty calls us to spread in every way the fragrances of His Word, and raise the standards of His Knowledge and Wisdom everywhere, and thus attract the pure in heart toward the Highest Kingdom, and enlighten the world by the radiance of Unity and Truthfulness. We should continually ask this loving One, "The Ancient of Days," to sustain us all in the service of His Great Cause; and to guide the children to their loving and merciful Father.

"Think of those who after the death of Jesus, who came for the salvation of the world, how they joined with one accord for the spreading of the lights of Unity: how they journeyed to every then known country and attracted the hearts of the people. If their enthusiasm in those days, was caused by the appearance of the Holy Spirit seen in the "likeness of a dove," now that same Spirit is transfigured in the form of the highest utterances to the people of Beha, and shines from the horizon of the Books of our God, EL ABHA, which swells the hearts, gives rest to the eyes and gladdens the innermost soul. There can be no doubt that the Most High deposited in every text in the Books, a spirit which sustains and confirms all people of discernment, strengthening them in every good and

perfect work. Ponder well upon the following which is shining from the horizon of His Sacred Book—Kitab-i-Akdas:

“If ye differ in anything bring it to God, so long as the Sun is shining from the horizon of this Heaven, but when it sets, bring that (difference) to His Utterances for they are sufficient (guidance) to the worlds. Say, Oh people, let not trouble take possession of you when the Kingdom of my Epiphany becomes concealed and the waves of the ocean of My Utterances are hushed.”.....

In the above quotation He taught us the following facts :

He substituted His Great Utterances, to be the representative in the place of His Supreme Self, and commanded every one to go to them, when in difficulty, after the setting of the Sun of Truth from the horizon of this world and its re-appearance in the horizon of the Heavenly Kingdom.

That God created the people and granted them intelligence enough to understand His Utterances and settle their differences in accordance to them without the aid of any commentator. He also taught us this in the Hidden Words when He said:

“Oh Son of Beauty ! By Myself and My Providence and by My Mercy and My Beauty, everything (of texts) that has descended to thee from the Tongue of Might ; which I have written with the Pen of Strength. We have intended it to fit thy position and thy condition rather than My Supreme Attitude and State.”

That He did not confine the understanding of

His texts to one special person, is apparent in instructing the people in trouble to go to them.

That His Word is the just balance which has descended from God, the All-wise, and it will fully satisfy our every need, for it is the only rule or method to follow. Therefore every action, every organization, every teaching, every system and every book must be judged by His Utterances only.

By this command, He did not permit any one to come between Him and us. Therefore He wanted us not to allow any created being to stand spiritually between us and our God, the Creator.

That there is no need after this Greatest Appearance, of any one beside God and His Utterances, for He has perfected for our race, all His promises;—He said, in the Most Holy Tablet:—“The Father is come and that which was promised is fulfilled” and in another Tablet, He said:—“The forerunner (Bab) came and gave you tidings; then the Perfect One came and perfected all things for you.”

Let it be known to you also that the position and attitude of the Branches of the Tree of Life, (Beha) are those of absolute servitude to God and His people. They are the finger-posts pointing the way toward the Sun of Truth. God has created them and raised them up to, continually, spread the knowledge of the Word, and to promulgate His commands among His creatures. He has commanded every one to honor them, respect them and appreciate their position, and to look upon them as an exemplar in the Shadow of the Word of God in disseminating the fragrances of His Utterances,

and raising the Standards of His Revelations. But in addition His command provides, that as long as they (the Branches) faithfully labor to serve the Cause of God and endeavor to spread the lights of the Word of God, then it is meet that the people of understanding and wisdom, and the believers shall take them as examples and follow in their footsteps. The texts of the Book and the Tablets of our Merciful God, bear witness to what was stated.

Oh you who are turning toward God, "The Ancient of Days," be assured that your Lord the All-Knowing has named His most glorious Temple as the "Branch" in many different Tablets, e. g. As the "Branch of Command"—the "Branch of Holiness" and the "Branch of Eternity." These are grandly beautiful titles confined to His Great and Glorious Temple—His Temple which was promised in the Holy Scriptures and which He builded with the Hand of Might after reaching the prison at Acre, which was named in the prophecies "The Land of Judgment" and "The White City." This was a symbol of the appearance of "The Ancient of Days" and all things mentioned in the Holy Scriptures were and are attributed only to His Absolute Perfection and glorious Temple (body). Likewise He called Himself "The Servant" a fulfillment of what was said in the Books of the Prophets of all times.

This glorious Temple is the image of God, after which we all were created. This is the Form of God which He took unto Himself, as a Manifestation

to His creatures, that they may be able to understand Him, and know that "He is He." This is the Form which Isaiah mentioned, 43:10: "Before Me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after Me." Malachi said: "The Lord shall suddenly come to His Temple." This is the "High Mountain, The Throne of God," as Enoch said, "Where the Holy and the Great God of Glory, the Eternal King will sit when He shall descend to visit the earth with goodness." Again, Enoch said: "This is the 'Tree of Life,' upon which God rests when He comes into Paradise." This is the Tree of Life into which we are promised to be grafted and become the leaves of the same Tree.

What are the duties which we have to perform on this earth, that we may deserve to attain to this high and divine attitude by being grafted to the Blessed Tree of Life and live with our loving Creator as His children forever and ever? They are the following:

To believe in all the Manifestations of God, through all His prophets and messengers whom He sent to teach us the truth, especially in this His Greatest Manifestation, Himself in Himself, clothed in the Garment of His Greatest Name, EL ABHA.

To obey and perform His commandments and obey His laws. To believe in His Greatest Appearance, without doing His commandments, is not sufficient; for the one cannot be accepted without the other.

To believe in His Oneness and Singleness, and

that there is no equal to Him in heaven or on earth.

To rise up for the helping of His Work by elevating His Commands and spreading His Word over all the worlds.

To endeavor to be naturalized into His characteristics by possessing a good, pure and enlightened heart. He said: "Thy heart is My Residence, sanctify it that I may descend into it."

To be strenuous in acquiring knowledge, especially spiritual, which is the greatest means to bring us nearer to God. Christ said to the scribe, "that he was not far from the Kingdom of God," for "he answered discreetly." If we are of those who know, those who reason, we will attain the divine attitude and be able to appreciate our condition and feel that we are in that supreme state as masters and like our Father, who wisheth us to be like Him. If we attain it by mere devotion, we cannot appreciate it, but rather feel that we reached it through the grace of God. Yet devotion is one of our plain duties toward Him.

To love God above ourselves and above everything else. He said: "Love Me, that I may mention thee and in the Spirit of Life confirm thee." Also, He said: "My love is my fort, he whosoever enters it is protected and safe."

To trust in God, depend upon Him alone and seek no one beside Him, for no satisfaction can be obtained from those who are inferior to Him. They are all His creatures and in need of His guidance. He created us all of the same clay, that no one "should glorify himself over the other." He is

the source of every intelligence, and manifested us from the essence of His knowledge, to seek Him, or rather "die in Him that He may live in us." We are all His possession, trees in His Garden, vines and branches of His Vineyard. It is not meet for us to seek or depend except upon the Gardener alone. If we do we shall fail and fall, and our fall will be great. He is the Comforter of our race, and the only One, as He said: "This is indeed the Father whereof Isaiah gave you tidings, and the Comforter, whom the Spirit (i. e., Christ) promised." He is the Tree of Life, and He said that we are all "leaves of the same Tree." All His messengers and prophets, even the Son, Jesus expressly knew and realized their spiritual poverty, weakness and need of His help—and begged earnestly of Him for assistance.

To Him only they attributed the power, the Kingdom, and the Glory: and they humbly taught us that neither their teachings nor their works were the production of their powers, but rather that of the Power of God, who manifested Himself in them. Knowing this Truth, it is not meet for us to repeat the error committed through all ages, in seeking the help of the messengers, prophets or the Son Jesus—and depending upon them instead of God. He forbade us to give what is due to Him, to those who are inferior to Him. Think over what He, Beha 'U'llah, uttered in this respect. "From the essence of Knowledge I manifested thee: How is it that thou seekest some one beside Me? And from the clay of love I kneaded thee: Why is it

that thou occupiest thyself with some one else?" Also, "if thou seekest some one besides Me, thou shalt not find, even if thou searchest the universe forever and ever." Again he said: "Let thy satisfaction be in Myself, and not in those who are inferior to Me, and seek not help from any besides Me, for nothing besides Me will ever satisfy thee."

To be just.—He (Beha 'U'llah) said: "The best of all to Me is justice. Desire thou not to cast it away, if thou desirest Me; and neglect it not, that thou mayest be faithful to me."

Be just to the Creator in order to be just to yourself and to your fellow creatures. If you are just to Him, the eye of your understanding will be opened, and you will attain the perfect sight to realize the Truth and know that you yourself and every created being are all His possession. Knowing this fact, you will never despise, degrade, misjudge or ill-treat any of your race, but rather endeavor to respect, honor, lift up, and justly treat your kind, as you yourself desire to be treated by others. This attainment of the Spirit of justice and high spiritual knowledge will prevent you from crossing beyond your limitation, thus leaving humanity in the Hands of their just Judge and Creator. By thus doing—being just and faithful to Him, you will be just to yourself and to those about you. It is a grave mistake on our part to neglect our own defects and judge those of others, whereby we assume to be rich when we are poor, naked and wretched. Beha—Glory be to Him—said: "Breathe not the sins of others so long as thou

art a sinner." He also taught us to "consort with the people of all religions with spirituality and fragrance," and not judge them, but rather leave them to themselves while they are advancing toward God, and pray for them.—

To be just, we are commanded to treat all people as brothers, as leaves of One Tree, no matter what kind of religion they believe, and to associate with them with affection, kindness and love. Never to defile our tongues with cursing or execration of any one; never to backbite, or be the cause of grief or sedition, discord or dissension. The religion of God was manifested, and His kingdom was established for the union, concord and peace of all the inhabitants of the earth; and we are forbidden to make wars against each other, or against other nations for any reason; and it is expressly prohibited to fight each other for the sake of differences in faith or religion, but rather to open, by kind language and the power of reasoning, the hearts to be reformed and prepared for the Spirit of God to dwell in them. If we are just and practice justice, ninety-five per cent of the miseries and sufferings of humanity would be removed, and this earth would be like the Garden of Eden. Grace, peace and comfort would pervade throughout all nations and countries.

Beha 'U'llah said: "Justice is one of my gifts to thee and one of My cares over thee, therefore put it before thine eyes continually."

To be grateful to God by praying to, glorifying and worshipping Him alone. He gave us our

existence, endowed us with high spiritual powers, gave us our free will to be independent in our actions, surrounded us with all beautiful material gifts—made the suns, moon and stars and the earth to move in their orbits for our service and benefit, and manifested Himself in the flesh to make us like Him, and promised us that we should attain the attitude of Divinity, enjoying his gifts, powers and blessing, sharing His Glory and ruling the universe with Him as His children. After this great generosity and wonderful Bounty our manhood requires us to thank Him and show our gratitude to Him by praying to, worshiping and glorifying Him, though He is not in need of that for He is worshiped and glorified in Himself.

These above mentioned are our spiritual duties toward our God and Creator. These we must make a part of our daily life, in order to gain His Pleasure and be numbered among the children of His Kingdom. For if we neglect spiritualities—our duties toward God—and depend upon moralities only, i. e., our duties to our fellow creatures, we cannot become divine like Him, and we will lose the benefit of the charitable actions we have done for humanity.

In this case we will be likened to a tree which produces sweet fruits for the benefit of those who eat them, but no benefit comes to that tree from all its fruits. Moralities alone cannot bring us nearer to God for many moral people died infidels. Every spiritual man must be a moral man but not every moral man is a spiritual one.

Know, Oh friends, sons of the Spirit, i. e. Christians, who entered this glorious Kingdom of the Father and drank from the cup of life of His Utterances, Beha 'U'llah (Glory be to Him) paid great attention to the children of the Kingdom (the Christians) and He used to mention them frequently and sometimes used to utter the texts specially in their favor. Of these texts the following one was written in the Tablet sent to Ra'is—He said :—"The people rallied around the house, and the eyes of Mohammedans and Christians wept, and thus the sound of weeping arose between heaven and earth, because of that which the hands of the tyrants have done against us. Verily we found the assembly of the Son (the Christians) had wept more bitterly than those of the other creeds—and herein are indeed signs to those who are thoughtful."

This is a glad tidings to Christians and a plain sign that they are to be the greatest factors in the Kingdom of the Father and that His Holy Word will spread among them and by them to others, and the traces of His Supreme Pen will have a higher influence and greater effect in their midst.

We who were Christians and embraced this faith, hope that our uprising will be the key for the opening of this door, and by our endeavors the lights will shine throughout the nations and the children of the Kingdom will be guided to the Face of their God, the Merciful.

The glorified Lord, Beha 'U'llah — promised those who are pure in heart, of whom Christ spoke

in the sermon on the Mount (i. e. Christians), that after His departure they were to hasten from all directions and come to His Bounty and receive His Gifts. Because those people, who at the time—when His Glorious Temple (body) was amongst them had no clean hands (i. e. were not pure in heart), therefore God did not allow His Garment to come in contact with them but appointed the great gifts for the people living noble lives, practicing lofty principles, dwelling in purity, having great knowledge, and highly educated—"people of strong sight." Certainly these are the Christians, who are living according to the principles of Christ, and are the most developed in knowledge and understanding. This supreme and great utterance has descended from His ancient Kingdom in the Tablet of the Temple (Heykel)—He said: (and what He says is the most fragrant) "Grieve not O Temple of Command, in not finding a seeker to receive thy gifts.—Thou hast been created for Myself, therefore be occupied in mentioning Me amongst My worshipers. This is what was ordained for Thee in a preserved Tablet. As we find the hands are not purified in the earth, thus we did not allow Thy Garment to come in contact with them, and with those who are not believers. Be patient in the Cause of Thy God, for He will send people of pure hearts and strong sights to hasten from all directions toward Thy Bounty, which surrounds and spreads throughout the world."

We hope that the above mentioned texts were

uttered for our credit and the credit of all Christians guided by our light to our God. For through us God will elevate His Cause, spread His name and change the earth into a new one, and make it to be the Garden of ABHA, as He promised in His Great Utterances. Surat-ul Heykel (the tablet of the Temple) was written by the Command of our Lord, Beha 'U'llah, on a large sheet of paper in this shape ★ 1873 A. D.

This tablet contains many conversations with the Heykel (Temple) and when the Lord was asked by one of the friends about them; the answer which was issued from the Supreme Pen was this.—“The speaker and the listener are one and it is Myself which rules over the worlds.”

“Oh God, Thou seest us who are attracted by the fragrances of Thy Word and who have labored in heralding Thee amongst Thy Creatures. Thou knowest that we confessed the Greatness of Thy Name, EL ABHA, and the Oneness of Thyself the Most High, we ask thee to confirm us in Thy service and in Thy work with a steadfastness which makes the innermost of the pure in heart to tremble with joy in the Kingdom of Thy Might; that the world may be flooded with the light shining from the horizon of the heavens of Thy Bounty and Mercy, and the souls and hearts of all shall be drawn to drink the waters of life from Thy everlasting fountains of Knowledge. Amen.”

CHAPTER XXX.

THE HIDDEN WORDS.

The following utterances, entitled the "Hidden Words," literally translated from the Arabic, are indisputable proofs of Beha 'U'llah's Divinity :

He is El-behi-ul-abha. This is that which descended from the Majestic Might through the Tongue of Power and Strength upon the prophets of the past. We have taken its essences and clothed them with the garment of Brevity, as a favor upon the divines that they may fulfill the Covenant of God and be able to perform in themselves what He entrusted to them ; that they may win, by the essence of piety, in the land of the Spirit, the Victory.

O Son of Spirit ! The first utterance is, Possess a good, pure and enlightened heart, that thou mayest possess a continual, everlasting, unceasing and ancient Kingdom.

O Son of Spirit ! The best of all to Me is justice. Desire thou not to cast it away, if thou desirest Me, and neglect it not, that thou mayest be faithful to Me, for by it, thou wouldst succeed to see all the things with thine own eye and not by the eye of the creatures, and know them by thine own knowledge and not by the knowledge of any in the world. Think over this—how thou oughtest to be. Justice is one of My Gifts to thee and one of My Cares over thee, therefore put it before thine eyes continually.

O Son of Man! Thou hast been in My Ancient Identity and in My Everlasting Being. I knew My love in Thee, therefore I created thee and laid upon thee the garment of My Likeness and manifested to thee My Beauty.

O Son of Man! I loved thy creation; for this I created thee. Therefore love Me, that I may mention thee and in the Spirit of Life, confirm thee.

O Son of Existence! Love Me, that I may love thee. If thou wouldst not love Me, I can never love thee. Know that, O Servant!

O Son of Existence! Thy paradise is My Love and thy heaven is My Nearness! Therefore be impatient to enter into it. This is what was ordained to thee in Our Highest Kingdom and Supreme Majesty.

O Son of Humanity! If thou desirest Myself, desire not thyself, and if thou wishest My Pleasure, shut thine eye from thy pleasure, that thou mayest die in Me, and I live in thee.

O Son of Spirit! No peace was ordained to thee save by cutting thyself from thyself and depending upon Me, for thy glory must be in My Name and not in thy name; and thy dependence upon My Face and not upon thy face; I alone deserve to be beloved above all things.

O Son of Existence! My Love is My Fort: Whosoever enters it, is protected and safe, and he who rejects it, leads himself astray and perishes.

O Son of Beyan! My Fort thou art; therefore enter into it, that thou mayest be saved. My Love is in thee; therefore know it from thyself that thou mayest find Me near.

O Son of Existence! My Bowl thou art, and My Light in thee: Therefore be enlightened by it, and seek not any beside Me, for I have created thee rich and abundantly bestowed Grace upon thee.

O Son of Existence! By the Hands of Power I made thee and by the Fingers of Strength I created thee and deposited in thee the essence of My Light: Therefore depend upon it and not upon anything else, for My Action is perfect and My Command must take its effect. Do not disbelieve this, and have no doubt in it.

O Son of Spirit! I have created thee rich: How is it that thou art poor? And made thee mighty: How is it that thou art low? From the essence of Knowledge I manifested thee: How is it that thou seekest someone beside Me? And from the clay of Love I kneaded thee: How is it that thou occupiest thyself with someone else? Turn thy sight to thyself, that thou mayest find Me standing in thee, Powerful, Mighty and Supreme.

O Son of Man! Thou art My Possession and My Possession will never be destroyed: How is it that thou art afraid of thy destruction? Thou art My Light and My Light will never be extinguished: How is it that thou darest extinction? Thou art My Splendor, and My Splendor never will be darkened: Thou art My Garment, and My Garment will never be worn out: Therefore dwell in thy love to Me that thou mayest find Me in the Highest Horizon.

O Son of Beyan! Face all (the people) by My Face and cast away anyone beside Me, for My

Authority is everlasting and will never cease ; My Kingdom is a continual one and has no end, and if thou seekest some one beside Me, thou shalt not find, even if thou searchest the universe for ever and ever.

O Son of Light ! Forget all things beside Me, and be comforted by My Spirit. This is from the Essence of My Command : Therefore direct thyself to it.

O Son of Man ! Let thy satisfaction be in Myself and not in those who are inferior to Me, and seek not help from any beside Me, for nothing beside Me will ever satisfy thee.

O Son of Spirit ! Ask thou not of Me that which thou dost not desire for thyself. Then be contented with what We have ordained for thy face, for that which We have ordained for thee, will benefit thee—if thou art contented with it.

O Son of the Highest Appearance ! I deposited in thee a Spirit from Me that thou might'st be My Lover : Why hast thou left Me and sought another lover ?

O Son of Spirit ! My Right to thee is great and cannot be forgotten ; My Favor upon thee is grand and cannot be hidden ; My Love to thee is existing and cannot be covered ; My Light to thee is apparent and cannot be secluded.

O Son of Humanity ! I have ordained to thee, from the trees of El Abha, the Holiest Fruits : How is it that thou hast laid them aside and been contented with that which is inferior ? Return to that which is best for thee in the Highest Horizon.

O Son of Spirit! I created thee high, but thou hast made thyself low: Therefore ascend to that for which thou wast created.

O Son of Blindness! I call thee to life and thou desirest death, for thou hast deserted what We wish for thee and followed that which thou desirest.

O Son of Man! Do not go beyond thy limitation, and do not claim for thyself what thou ought'st not, but rather bow to the Manifestation of thy God, the Mighty and Powerful.

O Son of Spirit! Do not glory by the glory of thyself over the poor, for I walk before him and see thee in thy miserable condition and rebuke thee.

O Son of Existence! How is it that thou hast forgotten the defects of thyself and been occupied with the defects of My Worshipers? Whosoever does that, there is a judgment upon him from Me.

O Son of Man! Breathe not the sins of any one so long as thou art a sinner, and if thou dost contrary to this command, humbled thou art, and to that I bear witness.

O Son of Spirit! Be assured that he who commands the people to perform justice, and commits iniquity in himself, is not of Me, although he is attributed to My Name.

O Son of Existence! Attribute not to any soul that which thou dost not desire to be attributed to thyself, and do not say that which thou dost not do. This is My Command to thee: Therefore obey it.

O Son of Man! Prevent not the face of My servant from obtaining whatever he may ask of

thee, because his face is My Face, and thou must be ashamed before Me.

O Son of Existence! Examine the deeds of thyself each day before thou wouldst be judged, because death cometh suddenly to thee, and thou shalt be obliged to stand for the judgment of thyself.

O Son of Blindness! I made death to thee as glad tidings: How is it that thou art in despair at its approach? I made the knowledge to thee a lamp: How is it thou art hiding thyself from it?

O Son of Spirit! The Gospel of Light, I herald to thee: Gladden thyself with it. And to the state of Holiness I call thee: Shelter thyself in it that thou may'st be in rest for ever and ever.

O Son of Spirit! The Holy Ghost heralds comfort to thee: How is it that thou art sorrowful? The Spirit of Command confirms thee in the Cause: How is it that thou hidest thyself? The Light of the Face walks before thee: How is it that thou art led astray?

O Son of Man! Be not sorry save when thou art far from Us, and be not happy except by returning and becoming nearer to Us.

O Son of Man! Cheer up thy heart with delight, that thou may'st be fitted to meet Me and become a mirror of My Beauty.

O Son of Man! Deprive not thyself from the Beauty of My Garment and lose not thy portion of drinking from My Beautiful Fountains, that thou may'st not suffer intense thirst throughout My Everlasting Being.

O Son of Existence! Keep My Commands because of thy love for Me, and cut thyself from that which thou desirest, if thou seekest My Pleasure.

O Son of Man! Neglect not My Laws if thou lovest My Beauty, and forget not My Commandments if thou wishest My Pleasure.

O Son of Man! If thou wilt run in the wilderness of Blindness and make haste to cross the space of Heaven, thou shalt not find rest save by obeying Our Command and being humble before Our Face.

O Son of Man! Glorify My Cause that I may bestow upon thee the secrets of glorification and shine upon thee with the Lights of Eternity.

O Son of Man! Be obedient to Me that I may descend to thee, and help in My Cause that thou may'st be victorious in the Kingdom.

O Son of Existence! Remember Me in My Earth that I may remember thee in My Heaven, in order that thine eye and Mine Eye may be pleased with it.

O Son of the Throne! Thy hearing is My Hearing; hear thou through it. Thy sight is My Sight; see thou with it, that thou may'st testify to Me in thine inmost soul, a supreme Holiness, and that I testify to thee, in Myself, a high position.

O Son of Existence! Seek martyrdom in My Cause with pleasure and be thankful for what I have destined for thee, that thou may'st rest with Me in the tents of Glory behind the veils of Might.

O Son of Man! Think of what is best for thee and be wise in thy action: Dost thou prefer to die upon thy bed, or rather to be martyred for My Cause upon the dust, and become a Star of My

Cause and a Manifestation of My Light in the Highest Paradise? Be just, O servant!

O Son of Man! By My Beauty! To tinge thy hair with thy blood is greater to Me than the creation of the two worlds and the brilliancy of the two great lights. Therefore, fear not to obtain it, O servant.

O Son of Man! To everything there is a sign, and the sign of love is to be submissive to what I have ordained and to be resigned to suffering for My Sake.

O Son of Man! The sincere lover longs for suffering, as the longing of the rebellious for forgiveness, and of the criminal for mercy.

O Son of Man! If thou wouldst not suffer in My Cause, how couldst thou walk in the way of those who are contented with that which pleases Me? If calamity did not befall thee in thine anxiety to come to Me, how couldst thou receive the Light for loving My Beauty?

O Son of Man! My Calamity is My Providence: In appearance it is fire and torture, but in reality it is Light and Mercy. Therefore hasten to attain it, that thou may'st become an Everlasting Light and Eternal Spirit. This is My Command: Know thou it.

O Son of Humanity! If thou receivest a grace, do not rejoice for it; and if humiliation come upon thee, do not mourn because of it, for a time shall come when both of them shall cease and be no more.

O Son of Existence! If thou art stricken with poverty, be not sorrowful, for at some day the power

of riches shall descend upon thee. Be thou not afraid of humiliation, for exaltation some day shall be thy portion.

O Son of Existence! If thou lovest this Everlasting and Eternal Kingdom, and this Ancient and Everlasting Life, thou shalt abandon this mortal and temporal kingdom.

O Son of Existence! Do not occupy thyself with this world, for with fire We try the gold, and with gold We test the creatures.

O Son of Man! Thou desirest the gold and We desire thy separation from it. Thou hast known the riches of thyself in obtaining it, and I have known that thy richness is to purify thyself from it. By My Life! This is My Knowledge and that is thine imagination: How can My Thought agree with thine?

O Son of Man! Distribute the money that I gave thee, upon My poor, that thou may'st distribute in Heaven from treasures of Exaltation which have no end, and from stores of Glory which cannot be destroyed: But, by My Life, the sacrifice of thy life is more glorious, couldst thou see with Mine Eye.

O Son of Humanity! The temple of Existence is My Throne: Cleanse it from everything, that I may occupy and be seated upon it.

O Son of Existence! Thy heart is My Residence: Sanctify it that I may descend into it. Thy soul is My Appearance: Purify it that I may be manifested in it.

O Son of Man! Put thy hand into My Pocket,

(trust in Me) that I may raise My Head from above thy pocket, (thy heart) shining with brilliancy.

O Son of Man! Ascend to My Heaven that thou may'st attain nearness to Me, and drink from everlasting Cups of Glory, pure wine which has no likeness.

O Son of Man! Many days have passed away in which thou hast occupied thyself with what thou desirest of superstitions and imaginations: How long wilt thou remain asleep upon thy bed? Lift up thy head from slumber, for the Sun has arisen and reached the Zenith, that He may shine upon thee with the Lights of Beauty.

O Son of Man! The Light has shone upon thee from the horizon of the Mount, and the Spirit of Holiness breathed in the Sinai of thy heart: Therefore cleanse thyself from obstacles and imaginations; then enter into the Court, that thou may'st be fitted for the Everlasting Life and prepared to meet Me; that no death, no trouble and no exhaustion can befall thee.

O Son of Man! My Eternity is My Creation and I have created it for thee; therefore make it as a garment to thy temple. My Oneness is My Invention and I have invented it for thee; therefore clothe thy soul with it, that thou may'st be the Dawning-star of My Unity, forever.

O Son of Man! My Greatness is My Gift to thee, and My Pride is My Mercy upon thee, but that which is due to Myself, no one can comprehend and no soul can realize! I have stored it in the treasures of My Secret and in the stores of My

Command, as a favor upon My Worshipers and a Mercy to My Creatures.

O Children of the Unknown God ! You shall be prevented from loving Me, and your souls shall be disturbed when I am mentioned, for your minds cannot endure Me, and your hearts cannot inclose Me.

O Son of Beauty ! By Myself and My Providence, and by My Mercy and My Beauty, everything of texts that has descended to thee from the Tongue of Might, which I have written with the Pen of Strength, We have intended to fit thy position and thy condition, rather than My Supreme Attitude and State.

O Children of Man ! Do you know why We created you from one clay ? That no one should glorify himself over the other. Always be mindful of how you were created, for as We created you from one substance, you must be as one soul, walking upon the same feet, eating with one mouth and living in one land ; that you may be able to show from your being and your deeds and actions, the signs of the Unity and the essences of abstraction. This is My Advice to you, O people of Light ; therefore profit by this advice, that you may attain the fruits of Holiness from the Trees of Might and Power.

O Children of the Spirit ! You are My Treasures, for in you I treasured the Pearls of My Secrets and the gems of My Understanding ; therefore preserve them. Otherwise some of the unbelievers of My people and the wicked ones of My creatures will discover them.

O Son of Him Who Stands by His Own Identity in the Kingdom of Himself. Know that I have sent to thee all the Fragrance of Holiness and have accomplished in these the Utterance, and have perfected the Grace by thee, and I have willed for thee what I have willed for Myself ; therefore dwell in Me and be grateful to Me.

O Son of Man ! Write all our Utterances to thee with the Substance of Light upon the tablets of the soul ; and if thou canst not, make the Substance out of the essence of the heart, and if impossible to do so, then write them with the ink of blood shed in My Cause. It is dearer to Me than all else, for its Light shines forever.

CHAPTER XXXI.

LETTERS OF INVITATION SENT TO THE RULERS OF THE EARTH.

Beha 'U'llah sent the following letters to the great people of the earth, summoning them to come to the banquet of His Kingdom and partake of its spiritual food, "eat and drink with the elect." No one of them came; and the prophecies, foretold by Christ and Enoch, were fulfilled. These letters are translated by Prof. E. G. Browne of the University of Cambridge, England.

LETTER TO THE POPE.

"O Pope! rend asunder the veils! The Lord of Lords hath come in the shadow of clouds, and the matter hath been decided on the part of God, the Powerful, the Unconstrained. Disclose the (divine) splendours (?) by the authority of thy Lord; then ascend into the Kingdom of Names and Attributes: thus doth the Supreme Pen command thee on the part of thy Lord, the Mighty, the Controller. Verily He hath come from heaven another time, as He came from it the first time: beware lest ye oppose Him as the Pharisees opposed Him without evidence or proof. On His right side floweth the River of Grace, and on His left side

the Sweet Waters of Justice: before Him go the angels of Paradise with the standards of signs. Beware lest Names withhold you from God the Maker of the earth and the heavens. Dost thou dwell in palaces, while the King of the Manifestation is in the most ruined of abodes? The breath of God is diffused throughout the world, because the Desired One hath come in His Most Great Glory. Lo! every stone and clod crieth, 'The Promised One hath appeared, and the Kingdom is to God, the Powerful, the Mighty, the Pardoning.' Beware lest sciences prevent thee from the King of what is known, or the world from Him who created it and left it. Arise in the Name of thy Lord the Merciful amidst the assembly of beings, and take the Cup of Life in the hand of assurance; drink therefrom, or not; then give to drink to those who advance of the people of (different) religions Remember when the Spirit* came; he who was the most learned of the doctors of his age gave sentence against Him in his city, while those who caught fish believed in Him; be admonished, then, O people of understanding! . . . And when We come unto you another time we see you fleeing from Us, therefore doth the eye of My compassion weep over my people; fear God, O ye who are in expectation! Look likewise at this time. How many monks seclude themselves in

1. *i. e.* Acre (Akkâ), which is often thus described by Behâ in his writings.

2. *i. e.* Christ, whom the Muhammadans call "*Ruhullah*," "The Spirit of God."

churches in My Name; and when the appointed time was completed, and We disclosed to them perfection (?), they did not know Me, after that they call upon Me at eventide and at dawn.... Do ye read the Gospel, and (still) do not flee to the Glorious Lord? This beseemeth you not, O concourse of learned ones! The Word which the Most Faithful wrote hath appeared: It hath indeed descended into the form of man in this time: blessed is the Lord, who is the Father: He hath come with His most mighty power amongst the nations; turn towards Him, O concourse of the good! The Father hath come, and that which hath been promised unto you in the kingdom is accomplished: this is a Word which was concealed behind the veil of Might, and when the promised (time) came, it shone forth from the horizon of the (Divine) Will with manifest signs.... My body longeth for the Cross, and my head for the spear (?) in the way of the Merciful One (i. e. God), that the world may be purified from sin.... The people of the Furkán (i. e. the Muhammadans) have arisen, and tormented me with torments whereat the Holy Spirit crieth out; and the thunder roars, and the eyes of the clouds weep because of the unbelievers. Whosoever imagineth that calamity will hinder Behá from that which God, the Creator of (all) things, willeth, say (unto him), No! by the descent of the rains, nothing shall prevent him from the mention of his Lord. By God the Truth! even though they burn him on the earth, verily he will

lift up his head in the midst of the sea, and will cry, 'Unto God indeed belongeth whosoever is in the heavens and in the earth.' And even though they cast him into a dark pit, they shall find him on the summits of the mountains, crying, 'The Desired One hath come by the authority of Might and Sovereignty.' And though they bury him in the earth, he will arise from the horizons of heaven, and will speak with the loudest voice, 'Behá hath come to the kingdom of God, the Holy, the Mighty, the Unconstrained.' And though they shed his blood, every drop thereof shall cry out and call upon God by this Name whereby the perfumes of the Garment are diffused through (all) regions. And regard the pearl, that its lustre is in itself: if thou coverest it with silk, verily it veileth the beauty and qualities thereof: such is man; his nobility is in his virtues.... O people of the Son!¹ we have sent unto you John (the Baptist) another time.² Verily he crieth in the wilderness of the Beyán, 'O creation of beings! make clear your eyes! The day of vision and meeting hath come nigh. Prepare then the way, O people of the Gospel. The day wherein shall come the Lord of Glory hath come nigh: prepare to enter into the Kingdom.' Thus was the matter decreed on the part of God, the Cleaver of the Dawn.... This is indeed the Father, whereof Isaiah gave you tidings, and the Comforter whom the Spirit (i. e. Christ)

1. *i.e.* Followers of Christ the Son of God.

2. The Bab, who was the precursor (*mushákir*) of Beha, is here intended.

promised. . . . Hasten unto Him, and follow not every denying infidel. And if the eye of any one oppose him in this, it behooves him to pluck it out; and if his tongue oppose him, it behooves him to cut it out. Thus was it written by the Pen of Eternity on the part of the King of Contingent Being (*Imkân*); verily He hath come another time for your deliverance, O people of creation: will ye kill Him after that He desireth for you enduring life? Fear God, O people of discernment. . . . The Glorious One crieth continually from the horizon of the Pavilion of Might and Greatness, and saith, 'O people of the Gospel! He hath come into the Kingdom who was out of it; and today we see you standing at the Gate. Rend the veils by the power of your Lord, the Mighty, the Munificent, and then enter into my Kingdom in my Name;' thus doth He command you who desireth for you enduring life; verily He is powerful over all things. Blessed are those who have known the Light, and have hastened towards it: behold, they are in the Kingdom, they eat and drink with the elect. And we see you, O children of the Kingdom, in darkness: this is not meet for you. Do ye fear to meet the Light because of your deeds? Advance thereto. . . . Verily He said, 'Come, that I may make you my fishers; come, that I may make you fishers of men;' and today we say, 'Come, that we may make you the vivifiers of the world.' Thus was the decree ordained in a tablet written by the Pen of Command."

LETTER TO NAPOLEON III.

"O King of Paris! tell the priest not to ring (*lit.* strike) the bells. By God, the True One! the Most Glorious Bell hath appeared on the Temple of the Most Great Name, and the fingers of the will of Thy Lord, the High, the Supreme, ring (*lit.* strike) it in the World of Eternal Power (*Jeberutu 'l-Baká*) through His Most Splendid Name (*Ismuhu 'l-Abhá*): thus have the most mighty signs of thy Lord descended once more, that thou mayest arise to commemorate God, the Creator of the earth and the Heaven.... We have sent one whom we have strengthened with the Holy Spirit that he may give you tidings of this Light which hath shone forth from the horizon of the Will of your Lord, the Exalted, the Most Splendid, and whose effects have appeared in the West, that ye may turn unto Him in this day.... Arise amongst the servants (of God) in My Name and say, 'O people of the Earth advance toward Him, who hath advanced toward you, for verily He is the Face of God (*Wajhu'lláh*) amongst you, and His Evidence in your midst, and His Proof unto you.... This is that whereof the Spirit¹ gave you tidings when He brought the truth, and the Jewish doctors opposed Him, until they committed that whereat the Holy Spirit lamented.... Say, O concourse of monks! do not withdraw yourselves in churches and sanctuaries; come forth

1. *i. e.* Christ, "*Ruh'ulláh*," as before stated.

(thence) by my permission, then occupy yourselves with that whereby your souls shall be profited, and the souls of mankind.... He who cleaveth to the house is indeed as one dead; it is meet for man that he should produce that whereby (other) beings shall profit; and he who hath no fruit is fit for the Fire.... Verily, O King, we heard from thee a word which thou didst speak when the King of Russia asked of thee concerning what was settled as to the order of war: verily thy Lord is Wise and Informed. Thou didst say, 'I was asleep in my bed (when) the cry of the servants (of God) who were wronged, even till they were drowned in the Black Sea, awoke me.' Thus did we hear, and God is the Witness of what I say. Thou canst witness that it was not (their) cry, but (thine own) lust (of war) which awoke thee, inasmuch as we tried thee and found thee afar off.... Hadst thou been the speaker (*lit.* owner) of that speech, thou wouldst not have cast the book of God behind thy back when it was sent unto thee on the part of one Mighty and Wise. Verily we tried thee therewith, and did not find thee in that state whereto thou didst pretend: arise and make reparation for what has passed away from thee. The world shall perish, and what thou hast, and the Kingdom remains to God, thy Lord, and the Lord of thy fathers who were of yore.... *Because of what thou hast done affairs shall be changed in thy kingdom, and empire shall depart from thine hands, as a punishment for thine action:* then shalt thou find thyself in mani-

fest loss, and commotion shall seize the people there, unless thou arisest to assist in this matter, and followest the Spirit in this Straight Way. *Thy glory hath made thee proud: by my life! Verily it shall not endure, but shall pass away, unless thou takest hold of this firm rope. We have seen humiliation hastening after thee, while thou art of those that sleep.*"¹

LETTER TO THE EMPEROR OF RUSSIA.

"O King of Russia! hear the voice of God, the Most Holy King! Then advance unto Paradise (which is) the place wherein abideth He who is named with the Most Comely Names amongst the most high assembly, and in the Kingdom of Creation by the name of God, the Splendid, the Most Splendid (*Allāhu'l-Bakiyyu'l-Abhā*): beware lest thy desires prevent thee from turning towards the Face (*wajh*) of thy Lord, the Merciful, the Clement.... One of thine Ambassadors did assist me when I was in prison, in chains and fetters. Therefore hath God decreed unto thee a station which the knowledge of no one comprehendeth, save He only. Beware lest thou change this lofty station; verily thy Lord is able to do whatsoever He willeth: He cancelleth what He pleaseth and confirmeth what He pleaseth, and with Him is the knowledge of all things in a Preserved Tablet....

1. The passages in italics contain the prophecy of the downfall of Napoleon III.

Be not of those who used to call upon Him by a Name amongst His Names, and when the Named One came, they denied Him, and turned away from Him, until they pronounced sentence against him with evident injustice. Look, then, and remember the days wherein came the Spirit,¹ and Herod gave judgment against Him : God hath helped the Spirit with the hosts of the Unseen."

LETTER TO QUEEN VICTORIA.

"O Queen in London ! Hear the voice of thy Lord, the King of (all) Creatures from the Divine Lote-tree that 'There is no God but Me, the Precious, the Wise.' Lay aside what is on the earth: then adorn the head of dominion with the diadem of thy glorious Lord: verily He hath come into the world with His most great Glory, and that which was mentioned in the Gospel hath been fulfilled. The land of Syria hath been honored by the advance of its Lord, the King of men, and the exhilaration of the Wine of Union hath seized upon the regions of the South and North : blessed is he who discovereth the scent of the Merciful (i. e. God), and advanceth to the dawning-place of Beauty in this clear Morning.... It hath reached us that thou hast forbidden the selling of slaves and hand-maidens : this is what God hath commanded in this marvelous Manifestation. God hath recorded unto thee the reward of this: verily He is the Dis-

1. *i. e.* Christ.

charger of the rewards of the well-doers.... And we have heard that thou hast entrusted the reins of deliberation into the hands of the Commonwealth.¹ Thou hast done well, for thereby the bases of the edifices of (all) affairs are made firm, and the hearts of those who are under thy shadow (i. e. protection), both of high and low, are made tranquil. But it behooves them² to be (as) trustees amongst the servants (of God), and to regard themselves as guardians over whomsoever is in all the earth. And when any one turns towards the assembly, let him turn his glance to the Supreme Horizon, and say, 'O God! I ask Thee by Thy Most Splendid Name (*bi'smika'l-Abha*) to assist me unto that whereby the affairs of Thy servants may prosper, and Thy countries may flourish; verily Thou art Powerful over all things.' Blessed is he who entereth the assembly in the regard of God, and judgeth betwixt men with pure justice: is he not of those who prosper? And look on the world as the body of a man who was created sound and whole, but diseases have attacked him from various and diverse causes, and his soul is not at ease for a day, but rather his sickness increaseth, in that he hath fallen under the control of unskillful physicians who are hurried away by vain desires, and are of those who stray madly. And if one limb of his limbs become sound in one age of the ages through a skillful Physician, the other

1. Alludes to the system of Representative Government.

2. i. e. those who are chosen to represent the people.

limbs remain as they were : thus doth the Wise and Knowing One inform you And that which God hath made the most mighty remedy and the most complete means for its health is the union of whomsoever is upon the Earth in a single Matter,¹ and a single Law. This can never be possible except through a skillful physician, perfect and strengthened (by God). By my life! this is the truth, and aught else is nothing but evident error."

Rulers are next exhorted to seek after peace rather than war as follows :

"We ask God that He will help the Kings to be at peace : verily He is able to do what He willeth. O assembly of Kings! Verily we see you increasing your expenditure every year, and placing the burden (thereof) on your subjects : this is naught but manifest injustice. Fear the sighs of the oppressed and his tears, and do not burden your subjects above that which they can bear, neither ruin them to build up your palaces : Choose for them that which ye choose for yourselves : thus do we expound unto you that which will profit you, if ye are of those who enquire."

1. *Amr*, i. e. Religion, in which sense the word is much used by the Babis.

TO IBRAHIM WHOM GOD CONFIRMED.

HE IS THE LISTENER AND THE ANSWERER.

A remembrance issued from the Presence of the Oppressed, to the one who confessed the Oneness of God and His Singleness, and that He is the Beginning and the End, the Visible and the Invisible. There is no God but He, the Single, the One, the All-knowing, the All-wise.

Verily We heard your supplications, and granted them to you, and remembered you with such remembrance, whereby the hearts will be attracted to you. We command you and My redeemers (those who redeemed themselves) to be charitable, upright and pious, holding fast to that which will draw you nearer to God your Lord, and the Lord of all the worlds.

Say : Praise be to thee, O God my Lord ; I ask of Thee, by Thy prophets, Thy chosen and Thy redeemers, to send down upon me, from the heaven of Thy Bounty, Thy special Providence and Thy particular Mercy ; and open, before my face, the doors of Thy gifts and blessings.

Indeed Thou art the Rich, the Compassionate, the Giver, the Generous. There is no God but Thee, the Forgiver, the Merciful.

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**This book is under no circumstances to be
taken from the Building**

[illegible]

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